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THE PHILOSOPHY OF BERDYAEFF

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THE late Archbishop Temple regarded Berdyaeff as one of the most important writers of the present time, and several good judges have said the same. He is a lonely, original, combative thinker, *nullius addictus iurare in verba magistri*, whose philosophy is based solely on his own spiritual experience. Contradictions and ambiguities may certainly be found in his writings, but the same may be said of every philosopher who recognizes what Heraclitus calls the fathomless depths of human personality, the clash of Yes and No in which Boehme says that all things consist. For him *omnia exeunt in mysterium*. He does not attempt an ambitious and coherent system, or disguise his transient obligations to the various currents of thought which he has followed and in part rejected. As he says himself, "the contradictions which may be found in my thought are expressions of spiritual conflict, of contradictions which lie at the very heart of existence itself."

Whether the contradictions lie at the heart of existence, and are therefore insoluble, or only in the chequered experiences of a courageous and independent thinker, is a question not easy to answer. In any case we are dealing with a philosophy which is not only personalist but in an unusual degree personal, and the career of the writer is relevant to an estimate of his opinions to an extent which does not apply to such professional teachers as Kant and Lotze.

"At the beginning of the twentieth century," he tells us, "Russian Marxism split up. The more cultured Marxists became the founders of an idealist and religious movement, while the majority began to prepare the advent of Communism." Berdyaeff, who belonged to the upper class in Russia, threw himself vehemently into the work of the minority, and suffered more than once under the Tsarist régime. The Bolsheviks made him professor of philosophy at Moscow, but

he detested the cruelty and still more the intolerance of the new rulers, and as a champion of liberty of thought was expelled from Russia in 1922. Since then he has lived in Paris, and has edited a review called *The Way*, a journal of liberal theology.

His little book on the Russian revolution is one of the best explanations of that cataclysm, and is important for an understanding of his social and political standpoint. There is a schismatic and eschatological disposition in Russian psychology, which finds expression both in strange religious sects, like the Skoptzy and the fanatical Raskolniki, the 'self-burners' of a former age, and as apocalyptic Nihilism. The so-called intelligentsia looked either to an ideal past, before Peter the Great, or to an ideal future, inspired by the West. In either case the reformers, unable to influence politics, were driven in upon themselves, tormented by the sight of human suffering, compassion for which is a note of the Russian character. But love for the idea of humanity is not the same as indulgence towards concrete human beings; it may even lead to cruelty, violence and tyranny. The intelligentsia tended rather to the anarchism of the aristocrats Bakunin, Kropotkin and Tolstoy than to the dictatorship of the proletariat. The thought of Berdyaeff shows traces of the ideas of de Maistre, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Ibsen, Marx and Kierkegaard, and a more abiding influence of Plato and Plotinus, Eckhart and Boehme. His disillusionment with Communism branded upon his soul two passionate convictions—the radical evil of any philosophy, like that of Hegel and the philosophies based on natural science, which tends to depersonalize man, and the supreme importance of freedom against any form of dictation from without. The old tyranny of theology, he thinks, has been supplanted by the even worse tyranny of natural science, encouraged by the spectacular success of advances in technology and mastery over nature. These sciences are only abstract disciplines, valid in all quantitative calculations, but irrelevant to the higher spiritual reality. It might be supposed that an enthusiastic advocate of individual freedom against the encroaching power of the state would look with a favouring eye upon the discredited liberalism of the last century. But the early affiliation of Berdyaeff to Marxism has been too strong for any sympathy of this kind. His hatred of the middle class, whom of course he calls by a French name, is almost insane. For whatever may have been the social conditions in Russia, in all the most civilized nations of the world we find great middle-class communities. The aristocracy where they still exist no longer count for anything, and the mass of the people who live on wages and salaries are certainly not proletarians. To speak of wage-slavery is merely silly; a slave by definition is one who is not allowed to sell his labour. If we include in the middle class all who are paid for their work,

we may agree with Euripides that "of the three classes it is the middle that saves the country." The author has more sympathy with the duelling aristocrat, a type long extinct in the West, than with the banausic tradesman.

Berdyaeff's personalism is almost fanatical. But he insists rightly that the self-conscious individual is not the person. The person, he says, was created by God in eternity. It did not come into being at our birth, nor will it pass out of existence at our death. Individualism shuts us up within ourselves, and divides us from that communion with our neighbours and with God in which our spiritual life consists. Our participation in the 'creative' activities of Spirit is the gradual conversion of Soul into Spirit. This, it need hardly be said, is the kernel of St. Paul's theology, so entirely misunderstood by Martin Luther. The 'old man,' the empirical ego, must die, even be 'crucified' —such is the deep tragedy of our life on earth. The 'new man' is in a sense superpersonal, for "we are all made to drink into *one* Spirit." And yet there is no absorption of the personality in an impersonal Absolute. To believe this is the snare of philosophic mysticism, and of Indian thought generally. It is fatal to love, the most distinctive part of Christianity. For we cannot love our transfigured selves, nor a transcendent Being who "dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto." In this Berdyaeff is not departing from Platonism. Plotinus also insists that personality must be preserved—δεῖ ἕκαστον ἕκαστον εἶναι. Beatified spirits are transparent to each other; but each has his own centre, though his circumference embraces the whole universe of *Nous*. But our author is not satisfied with the Platonic aspiration to reach the Idea of the Good. It is, he thinks, too impersonal and too static. Our life should be a sacrament of the ceaseless 'creativity' of God. Not withdrawal, but withdrawal and return, is the work to which we are called. At the same time, we can only realize our higher selves by communion with 'the super-personal Values,' Goodness or Love, Truth and Beauty. We must beware of too exclusive moralism. Berdyaeff is in thorough sympathy with mysticism as expounded by Eckhart and Boehme, but he would perhaps hesitate over the German mystics' "Ich bin entworden," and the prayer of Crashaw's St. Teresa, "Leave nothing of myself in me." Spiritual life is not a kenosis. As regards the ancient Greeks, it is true that they emphasized the idea of personality much less than Western philosophy since Descartes; but the change has been not so much an increased recognition of the personality of the Pneuma, Nous, or Atman (the three words are almost identical in meaning), as the awarding of a metaphysical significance to the conscious ego in distinction from the objects of consciousness; and we may hold, as our author certainly does, that this is a mistake.

Berdyaeff's theory of Freedom is intended as an explanation of the evil in the world. God created the world out of nothing; but Freedom is not determined by God; it is rooted in the Nothing, in Boehme's *Ungrund,* from all eternity. "The Creator cannot be held responsible for Freedom which gave rise to evil." "God the Creator is all-powerful over the created world, but He has no power over non-being, the uncreated freedom which is impenetrable to Him." This nothing or non-being is what the Greeks called τὸ μὴ ὄν, not precisely nothing, but no thing, a kind of substratum with no qualities. The difference may be illustrated by a line about the state of the body after death; τὸ μηδὲν εἰς οὐδὲν ῥέπει. "Three principles are active in the world: Providence, the supercosmic God; Freedom, the human spirit; and fate or destiny, the solidified, hardened outcome of the dark meonic Freedom."

It is not clear to me that this strange doctrine takes us beyond what is often considered the most vulnerable part of Platonism, its attempt to account for evil. Immaterial 'matter' (ὕλη), on the verge of absolute non-entity, has no qualities; it is the passive recipient of forms. How then can this obscure principle acquire substance enough to be a positive hindrance and even an active opponent of the Soul of the World and of the Spirit which the Soul contemplates? It is well known that exoteric Platonism did not discourage the idea that 'matter' is the source of evil; an ambiguous passage in Plato was interpreted as sanctioning the belief in an evil soul of the world. It seems plain that either there must be a positive evil principle in conflict with the good, or evil must be regarded as only the lowest degree of an emanation from the One who is also the Good. Esoteric Platonism on the whole attempted to solve the problem by wiping out the minus signs, a solution which can never satisfy a moralist. Berdyaeff does not accept it; he congratulates the Manichees and Gnostics for at least taking evil seriously. We do not find any clear and consistent acceptance of either theory in Plotinus; Proclus says definitely that matter is not the cause of evil. In Berdyaeff it is not very plain how Freedom, which has so nebulous an origin, can be the highest endowment of mankind. But we cannot blame any philosopher for failing to penetrate this mystery. Dr. Johnson, with his sturdy common sense, says, "there must be some explanation, but we do not know what it is."

Man, as has been said, is an 'amphibious' creature. He lives partly in the world of things, and partly in the world of values. He has affinities with every grade of being, and in passing from quantity to quality, from time to eternity, from appearance to reality, put it how we will, we must use symbols. This is the origin and the justification of myth and cultus, those non-transparent intermediaries by which human beings, afflicted with every degree of myopia, can

alone have glimpses of the invisible, and introduce some semblance of unity into their tragic and perplexing experience. Symbols presuppose the existence of two worlds; the meaning of one world is to be found in another. "It is only as a spiritual being that man can know the good as such; as a social being he knows only the changing conceptions about the good." "Only by rising above the stream of the naturally historical and psychical life can man make valuations and see goodness, truth and beauty." "Spiritual life implies something higher than itself towards which it is ascending." Even those who see in nature the incarnation of the holy often fail to rise above naïve realism, which is the philosophy of the materialist. It is an error to give absolute value to the historical process. The life of the Church is a myth created within history. Historical dogmas, understood by materialistic dogmatism, the angry brother of dogmatic materialism, destroy the symbolism which connects them with religion. What our divines called the process of Christ is, as St. Paul felt, a dramatization of the death to sin and the new birth to righteousness. But "an infinite mystery" remains. The facts of mysticism are absolute, our thoughts about them are relative. Plato realizes that even philosophy must be symbolic.

As a theologian Berdyaeff is interesting to Western readers as representing the Orthodox tradition, which is unfamiliar to most of us. It differs in some ways from Western Catholicism. In matters of sex the Eastern Church has always been more indulgent than the Western. The words of our Litany, "from fornication and all other deadly sin" are a lunge at the Greeks, for whom *fornicatio inter solutos veniale est peccatum.* Divorce is allowed rather freely, the theory being that marriage without love is not a Christian sacrament. The doctrine of nature and grace is also rather different. The Catholic doctrine is that man is by nature a sinful being; he is saved by a supernatural infusion of grace from outside as it were. Some Protestant bodies even speak of the total depravity of human nature. The Orthodox teaching is that man was created a spiritual being, who by the exercise of free will has declined from his true nature. The work of the Holy Spirit is to restore him to his original purity. Berdyaeff, who rejects the traditional pictures of hell, and Calvin's predestination, with indignation and horror, thinks that ultimately all men will be saved. Logically, for him as for Origen, even "auld Nickie Ben," whose fate moved Robbie Burns to pity, must "take a thought and mend." This is one of several points which make the Russian thinker a disciple of Origen. Like Origen he holds that the pre-existence and post-existence of the soul stand or fall together. Creation is perpetual, as its Creator is eternal. The human soul cannot get rid of its stains in a short earthly life, but neither Origen nor Berdyaeff accepts reincarnation in the Indian

form. The existing world-order had a beginning and will have an end. But it is inconceivable that the Creator can will the annihilation of all that He has made. There will be other world orders after this, as there have been others before our cosmos came into being. It is possible that this theory may be acceptable to those who are worried, not unreasonably, by the second law of thermodynamics. A layman in science might protest to the physicist: "You tell us that the universe is running down like a clock. If so, the clock must have been wound up at a date which we could name if we knew it, and whatever Power wound it up once may presumably wind it up again. It is useless to say that this is impossible, since on your showing it has been done. The Creator may have a trick or two up his sleeve which you have not yet discovered." The sympathy of the author with Origen is not surprising. Eastern theology has always been Platonic, whereas the West, as we see from St. Thomas Aquinas, has been mainly Aristotelian. But he might have added that English theology has always been true to "her old loving nurse, the Platonic philosophy."

Following Eckhart, Berdyaeff distinguishes between the Godhead and God. The Absolute can hardly be the object of love or worship. For the Platonists, He is "beyond existence." Berdyaeff finds great value in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. The Second Person of the Trinity, the Logos-Christ, is the Soul of the creation, but something more, for he is a divine Being, God though not the Godhead, and so transcendent as well as immanent. As the Agent in creation, and the sustaining Power throughout history, he suffers in and for mankind. By the historical Incarnation, so our author teaches, he brought redemption to sinful humanity. In the bold language of the Greek Fathers, he became man in order that man might become divine. The work of redemption, the author thinks, will not be complete till all are redeemed.

In considering the numerous books of Berdyaeff as a whole, I am inclined to agree with the concluding words of Professor Clement Webb in his careful summary of "The Destiny of Man" in *Philosophy* for October 1937. He is acknowledged to be a thinker of great intellectual courage and remarkable insight into "the abysmal depths of personality." It is more doubtful whether he is always a consistent reasoner, and whether he has always resisted the temptation of passing lightly over difficulties. The rather strange theory that Freedom is independent of the will of God has been already referred to. There are great difficulties in believing either that God is responsible for the sin and suffering of the world or that He is not responsible. In dealing with his other primary concept, that of personality, we are compelled to ask what is the relation between the eternal and timeless spirit and the living creature which came

into the world at birth. Berdyaeff speaks of the horror and mystery of death as if this dread were a universal attribute of humanity. This is far from being true. Many are prepared to echo the words of Lewis Nettleship, who faced death in the Alps with cheerful courage: "Death does not count." Most of us are rather afraid of dying, but not of being dead. "Pour être mort, malheureusement il faut mourir." Spinoza says that there is no subject on which "a free man" will think so seldom as death. Life, Plato tells us, is a 'rehearsal' of death; we die daily, as St. Paul says; but Plato has given us an immortal picture of the calmness with which his ideal man, Socrates, said good-bye to this world. There are other points in which Berdyaeff has not made himself clear. What importance does he attach to the literal occurrence of those fact-like stories, as von Hügel calls them, which are an integral part of traditional Christianity? Orthodox theology gives a very exalted position to the Virgin Mary, "the Mother of God," as she is called on the Russian icons. Berdyaeff accepts these honorific attributes, though as an object of superhuman homage the Virgin is a purely ideal figure. On page 76 of *Freedom and the Spirit* he says, "What is essential to me for my own resurrection to eternal life is not the doctrine of Christ's resurrection, but rather the fact that this event has actually taken place. I cannot be indifferent as to whether the mystical fact did or did not occur, whereas I can be quite indifferent with regard to the theological or metaphysical doctrine of the resurrection." But on page 83 we read, "a truly symbolic way of thinking prevents us from accepting symbols as external realities." It is not easy to reconcile the former of these two quotations with other parts of his chapter on "Symbol, Myth, and Dogma." Life is sacramental and revelational, but we are no longer so ready to believe that suspensions of the laws of nature are the most convincing vehicles of a spiritual revelation.

There seem, as I have said, to be ragged edges in Berdyaeff's philosophy; but his speculations are worthy of serious attention, all the more because for him metaphysics are no mere intellectual exercise, as they were for example for Hume, but, in accordance with the ancient definition, the art of living, hammered out in the course of an earnest and tragic experience in troubled times. But it is mainly as a prophet of personal and social courage that he shows his real power, and makes his original contribution to the thought of our age. His book entitled *Slavery and Freedom* (1937) has gained in cogency from the terrible events of the last six years.

Man is born free, but is everywhere in chains. So he argues, not quite in the sense of Rousseau. There is hardly one of the idols of the marketplace that he has not torn down from its pedestal. Man has been, he says, "a slave to God," when he pictures God as an absolute monarch, instead of as "a liberator, who suffers with the

world and with man." That is to say, the God of religion is the Logos-Christ, not the absolute Godhead: "God is freedom and meaning, love and sacrifice." Man is a slave to what are called laws of nature, and imagines a unity and harmony which has no existence. The world of objectified nature is not the real world, but "an enslaved world, alienated, depersonalized." "Man becomes a mere organ, and his freedom, which is bound up with his spiritual independence of society and nature, is abolished." Man is a slave to society, which is idolatrously invested with a higher personality than man. "The organic ideal of society is an enslaving lie." Revolutions break up one organism only to create another. Man is a slave to civilization, which is the mind of the herd, not the 'culture' of the élite. Here the unexpected aristocratism of the author comes into play. Socialist as he is, he has no respect for the *profanum vulgus*. Man is a slave to himself, for the strength between freedom and slavery is carried on within him. A servile society, such as the totalitarian State, is the outcome of the inner slavery of man. Some men think that they may put up with external social slavery and emancipate themselves inwardly only; but inward liberation demands external liberation also; the free man cannot accept social slavery. Egocentricity is the original sin of man, a violation of the true relation between the ego and the non-ego. It is the dissolution of personality. Such a man may not recognize that he is turning the highest values into instruments of selfishness. "There is nothing more hopeless than the pride of the humble." The individualist isolates himself and accepts the universe solely as violence offered to himself. There are two types of solitariness—that of the creative personality and that of the impotent rebel. One is strength, the other weakness. Man is a slave to the State. The temptation to exercise sovereignty, which Christ rejected in the wilderness, is an enslaving force. The life of Christ was this conflict carried through to the utmost limit. The Kingdom of Cæsar has never tolerated the Kingdom of God except as a mere tool. That weird phenomenon the totalitarian State wishes to be itself a Church, to dominate the souls of men. It is no new thing; all States strive to be totalitarian; all theocratic States and empires have been totalitarian. There is a radical antagonism between State morality and the Gospel. No one has ever justified the ethics of the State, of which the principle that everything is permitted is a characteristic. The arrogance of an individual is not so terrible as the arrogance of a nation, a State, a class, or a Church. Politics is always an expression of the slavery of man. "The State always gives its vote for the crucifixion of Christ." The State should be limited; a totalitarian State is the Kingdom of Satan. Against State-worship even anarchism is right. There is nothing more terrible than political power possessed by fear. Bureaucracy is the

extreme form of depersonalization. The 'statesmanlike mind' is devoid of all feelings of humanity. Cruelty is the reverse side of sentimentality; Robespierre, Dzherzinsky, Hitler, were all sentimental. Man is a slave to war. A State which is going to war is like a gang of bandits with no code of morals and manners. War has become too base a thing, too absolutely evil, to give rise to tragic conflict; present day wars are waged on a far lower level than any traditions of chivalry. The warfare of to-day recognizes no personality at all. The subjects of a militarized State are cowards and slaves at home. Man is a slave to nationalism, to revolution, which in the hour of victory becomes diabolically cruel; and to utopian socialism, the tyranny of the community, which denies the rights of personality and enslaves men quite as thoroughly as other forms of totalitarianism.

There is much in this book which to a Western reader may seem exaggerated and unpractical. To a Russian compromise is treason; to an Englishman it is wisdom, not only the wisdom of the serpent. To an Englishman with his long experience of popular government politics is the art of the second-best. The good is the enemy of the best. If we aim directly at the ideal we shall get nothing done. But no Russian thinks in this way.

Nevertheless, at a time when the democracies have had to fascise themselves in order to defeat fascism, when under the stress of war and threats of war organization has defeated liberalism and almost discredited liberty, when the idea of planning has become a fetish and private enterprise is frowned upon and curtailed, nothing can be more opportune than this defiant pronouncement in favour of liberty, this insistance on the sacredness of the individual person, this call to courage and self-sacrifice in defence of the most intimate and essential human rights. If these are submerged under a wave of herd domination, or sacrificed in the interest of power politics, civilization in the higher sense is doomed, and we have fought the Nazis in vain. History says *vae victoribus* quite as often as *vae victis*.

In conclusion, Berdyaeff has one reflexion which is both profoundly Christian and encouraging at a time when pessimism is only too plausible. The terrible convulsions of the last thirty years, the greatest calamity which has ever befallen the human race, will leave nothing standing as it was before. There can be no return to the social order of the last century, on which our author passes far too severe a judgment, but which has produced all the fruits which it was capable of bearing. Much that is good and much that is evil has been swept away. It is possible that the West has really committed suicide, and the warning of the New Testament that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God can never be

forgotten. Berdyaeff is alive to the dire peril; he even predicts the discovery of the atomic bomb. But the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. The religion of Christ has always thriven under persecution and been corrupted by prosperity. The road to Calvary is also the road to the Resurrection. *Souffrir passe; avoir souffert ne passe jamais.*

DESCARTES AND LEIBNIZ IN 1946

On Their 350th and 300th Birthdays

PROFESSOR PAUL SCHRECKER

I

THE three hundred and fiftieth birthday of René Descartes and the three hundredth of G. W. Leibniz, both being commemorated this year, recall to mind an epoch which, in many respects, resembled our own more than any other period of modern history. The Thirty Years' War during which Descartes served four years in the armies of the Dukes of Nassau and Bavaria and the aftermath of which determined many circumstances of Leibniz's life and work, was largely an ideological war leaving Europe in a state of tension, which the Peace of Westphalia did little to allay. As a matter of fact, the strife continued in many changing forms up to the time of the American Declaration of Independence and the French Revolution, if it can be said at all to have been terminated by these events.

More than in any other epoch, the philosophers of the seventeenth century were political protagonists. Like those of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, the systems of Descartes and Leibniz were not incidental to given texts of political and social events, but contributed to producing and to shaping them. Neither of them nor any other of the great spirits of the time was a university professor; they taught only through the media of their written works. In so far as the universities were concerned, the thinkers whose works survived were outsiders, if not outcasts. When, as in the case of Spinoza, a continental university offered a chair to one of them, he refused it for the sake of preserving his intellectual freedom.

In whatever light the doctrines of these philosophers may appear to posterity, in their time they were genuinely revolutionary. Only because intellectual history later emasculated their new methods and visions before adopting them officially, have some of their ideas become commonplace patterns of thought, while their very essence remains a revolutionary plea for liberty, reason, and justice, which to-day still holds far more than antiquarian interest.

Nothing could more convincingly illustrate the revolutionary tendency of Descartes' search for truth, not only within the frame of reference of his own time but in itself, than the fact that when, a few years ago, a reactionary counter-revolution set out in Germany

to suppress the achievements of the French Revolution, its philosophical mercenaries promptly undertook to "refute" Cartesianism, feeling very clearly that, as Michelet affirmed long ago, the French Revolution began with Descartes.[1]

What is it, then, that endows the simple, dispassionate and, in so far as politics are concerned, apparently irrelevant work of Descartes with its revolutionary élan? To speak of revolutions in science is more than a mere metaphor. Just as the essence of a political revolution is the unlawful change of the generative principles of lawfulness, called constitution, so a revolution in science is not marked by sensational inventions and discoveries, but by such changes of the generative principles of knowledge, called methods, which are not authorized by the actually valid canons of methodology.[2] The publication of Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia* certainly was one of the most important events in the history of modern science, and changed our knowledge of the universe much more radically than Descartes' *Discours de la Méthode* or *Principes de Philosophie*. Yet the *Discours* was revolutionary, which the *Principia* hardly were; the reason for this difference being that, whereas Newton's work, the work of an authentical genius, used and improved existing methods, the *Discours* overthrew the whole elaborate system of methodology built up by many centuries of medieval tradition. We are to-day so accustomed to considering independent reasoning and experience as the only methods of attaining scientific knowledge, that we cannot easily understand that prior to Galileo and Descartes so many generations considered such methods and tests of truth as next to irrelevant and satisfied their desire for knowledge with theories and opinions legitimated only by the fact that they had been voiced by some consecrated authority or were deducible from a system recognized on such grounds. Yet, however difficult it may be for a modern mind to understand it, whatever opinion was incompatible with some passage of the Sacred Scriptures, of Aristotle, Euclid, Hippocrates, Thomas Aquinas, or some other schoolman of equal credit, was by this very incompatibility marked as false, nay as criminal nonconformity. Mathematics, physics, medicine, and history, just as philosophy and theology, were paralysed by the absolute authority of the Ancients. Even physical geography did not enjoy a greater freedom. One of the crimes for which Michel Servet was burned at the stake was his having affirmed Palestine to be an arid and barren region, whereas, according to the Old Testament, it was the land where milk and honey flowed. Even in 1678, after the Cartesian revolution of science had already

[1] Cf. P. Schrecker, *La République, fille de Descartes* ("La République Française," Vol. I, No. 2, New York, 1944).

[2] Cf. P. Schrecker, *Le problème de la révolution dans la philosophie de l'histoire* ("Renaissance," Vol. I, pp. 270–290, New York, 1943).

begun to bear rich fruit, Louis XIV forbade the introduction of Cartesian physics at his universities and imposed on them the teaching of petrified Aristotelian science. The motive behind this autocratic interdiction illuminates the significance of the Cartesian revolution. For if disrespect for authority were tolerated in the field of knowledge, nothing could be expected to prevent the spirit of subversion from spreading into the entire domain ruled by some vested authority.

It is doubtful whether Descartes ever realized the potential political effects of his revolution. In his works he expressly limited the scope of his new method of common sense and reason and the individualistic starting point of free consent to evidence to the field of knowledge, pointedly excepting even religious belief from its reach. But this question is at best of mere biographical interest. It is, indeed, one of the best-founded experiences of history that civilization, despite its articulation by several seemingly independent fields, tends toward organic unity, so that every radical upheaval originating in one of the fields, be it knowledge, religion, politics, or any other, will in due course of time involve all the others. Any revolution of knowledge is certain eventually to produce a political revolution, and any religious revolution will finally subvert the political order and the basic methods of knowledge. It was, therefore, impossible for the dethroning of the method of authority achieved by Descartes in the field of knowledge not to weaken and finally overthrow similar methods of authority in the field of justice, commonly called politics. Characteristically enough, the movement towards emancipation from despotic authority which in France was spearheaded by science, emerged at about the same time in England under a religious guise. The Brownist doctrine and the Separatist trend which led towards the refusal to accept the guidance of the Church in matters concerning an individual's pursuit of salvation, were, essentially if not historically, a translation of the structure of the Cartesian individualistic revolution of science into terms of Christian religion. In both cases the discarding of traditional patterns necessitated auxiliary hypotheses which provoked perplexing dilemmas and called for the intellectual efforts of another generation to overcome them.

The basic traits of the Cartesian system are too well known to require more than short mention. Truth having been defined as a knowledge so clear and distinct that its evidence cannot be contaminated by doubt, the main problem became that of justifying the dependability of the merely subjective criteria of clarity, distinctness, and evidence. Since no consciousness is able to transcend its confinement in an individual mind, the task of proving the fitness even of the most clear and distinct knowledge to the world outside the individual consciousness required the intervention of a *deus ex*

machina in the form of divine veracity, called upon to back the feeling of evidence and to guarantee the objectivity and reality of subjectively indubitable knowledge. However unsatisfactory this solution might appear, it was obviously the only means of overcoming the confinement of knowledge to each thinking individual's own consciousness, which had resulted from the individualistic starting point of the *Cogito*. From another viewpoint, the consequences of this theory proved to be still more dangerous. Since Descartes admitted no resemblance between the human and the Divine Intellects, the truth accessible to human reason no longer fitted the traditional scholastic definition of an *adaequatio res et intellectus*. In so far as a one-by-one relation between the representation of the universe by human science and the representation of the same universe in the Divine Intellect still remained, it was in no way conceived of by Descartes as intrinsic or as a similarity. The act of creation, according to his doctrine, has impressed upon the human soul certain innate ideas which represent the world in a certain way without resembling it at all. Even necessary truths of reason, such as the principle of contradiction or the simplest theorems of arithmetics, were believed to owe their value to a decree of the Divine Will, but were not objectively necessary.[1] God might have created a world in which their contrary would be true. Thus the arbitrary and, as it were, anthropological character of the whole system of science based on these essentially contingent propositions obstructed to the human mind all paths on which to escape from the seclusion in individual consciousness, and finally led philosophy into the impasse of absolute idealism and solipsism. This consequence, although systematically worked out only in the work of Bishop George Berkeley, was already clearly realized by the first generation of Cartesians and their opponents. Geraud de Cordemoy in his *Discours Physique de la Parole* tried in vain, as early as 1668, to invalidate the solipsistic implications of Descartes' system, at least in so far as the existence of souls other than each one's own was concerned, by referring to the existence of language.[2] The Jesuit Father Daniel took up the anti-Cartesian argument in his *Voyage du Monde de Descartes*;[3] and the Jesuit adversaries of Father Malebranche, in the anti-Cartesian *Journal de Trévoux*, censured the author of the *Recherche de la Vérité* on account of the allegedly idealistic consequences of his Cartesianism.

[1] *Oeuvres de Descartes*, ed. Adam-Tannery, IV, p. 118; IX, p. 236, etc. Cf. E. Bréhier, *La création des vérités éternelles dans le système de Descartes* ("Revue Philosophique," 1937, pp. 336 sq.).

[2] The work was first published in Paris, 1668; second edition, 1677.

[3] *Voyage du Monde de Descartes*, Amsterdam, 1696, 2 vols. Vol. 2, p. 49: "Chaque Cartésien, en particulier, pour parler conséquemment, doit dire aussi sérieusement des autres hommes, qui sont au monde avec lui, que ce sont des Automates, qu'il le dit des bêtes."

The structural parallelism between the Cartesian and Brownist doctrines becomes evident when it is recalled that the latter was thrown into a similar paradox. The "Se-Baptism" of John Smyth, first pastor of the community whose members some years later embarked on the *Mayflower*, was, indeed, nothing but anticipated solipsism translated into terms of religion. Since no authority was believed susceptible of being entrusted with the function of legitimating any interpretation of the Scriptures as true and genuine, only immediate and individual inspiration by the Holy Spirit could authenticate individual faith. And since the validity of baptism was thought to depend upon the true faith of him who administered it, John Smyth came to the conclusion that nobody could be validly baptized except by himself.[2]

Thus emancipation from authority, in the fields of knowledge as well as of religion, had to be paid for by the isolation of the individual and the surrender of the certainty of truth or salvation which had been warranted by authority. The same rationalism which endeavoured to render the system of knowledge autonomous and independent of any traditional or conventional pattern, thereby severed the entire system from its direct communion with reality and was eventually forced to secure the reliability of human knowledge on the transcendent ground of divine veracity; thereby again weakening, if not totally obliterating, its claimed autonomy and sovereignty. Yet, this congenital defect by no means prevented the spirit of freedom and independence from spreading from the fields of knowledge and religion to the field of political ideology and organization. If nothing ought to be accepted as true which is not so evident to the individual that he cannot refuse it his consent, why should anything be accepted as just and honest to which the individual has not freely consented because he realizes its justice and equity? If authority is unable to guarantee truth, why should it exercise more power in the field of human actions and be entrusted with deciding what is good and just? This question, though hardly ever raised so outspokenly, dominated political philosophy during the period which separated the British, the American, and the French Revolutions from the *Discours de la Méthode*. Spinoza, John Locke, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Voltaire were the protagonists of political thought who, different though their outlooks may have been, derived their inspirations from the Cartesian revolution against authority in the field of pure knowledge and drew the consequences in order to found a new society. The epistemological paradox, however, into which the individualistic conception of knowledge had become entangled, was forgotten and

[2] Cf. *The Works of John Smyth*, Tercentenary edition, ed. W. T. Whitley, Cambridge, 1915, 2 vols.; in particular I, pp. xc sq., II, pp. 563 sq. H. M. Dexter, *The True Story of John Smyth, the Se-Baptist*, Boston, 1881, pp. 27 sq.

neglected by them rather than being effectively solved, so that it was to obtrude again much later under a new guise. The only real attempt to overcome it was made, a generation after Descartes' death, by Leibniz; but the tragic fate of the latter's work prevented his ideas from ever achieving any deeper influence on history.

II

It is, indeed, one of the tragedies of the history of ideas that the very form of Leibniz's writings and the neglect with which throughout centuries his own nation has treated the task incumbent upon it of publishing the practically complete collection of his manuscripts, never granted to more than a few specialists the privilege of gaining full access to his ideas. All the more or less comprehensive editions which have been attempted were either thwarted by incompetent editors or interrupted by political events such as the Prussian invasion of Hanover in 1866[1] or the Second World War. It does not even seem certain at this writing whether Leibniz's manuscripts, which were kept at the Landesbibliothek in Hanover, and the editorial apparatus built up during the course of many decades by the Prussian Academy of Sciences have survived the bombings of Hanover and Berlin. Thus it may well be that the sins committed by his nation against his spirit have deprived the world for ever of the possibility of taking full advantage of the gigantic and heroic work accomplished by one of the wisest and noblest figures of the philosophic pantheon.

There is another more essential factor which has prevented a renascence of Leibnizianism from ever declaring itself, while the history of ideas has witnessed such frequent reincarnations of Platonism, Thomism, Kantianism—let alone the apparently inextirpable crowd of neo-Sophists, and neo-Cynics. The very universality of Leibniz's thought seems to have barred an ever more specializing posterity from the only practicable approach to his ideas. By cutting up his *globus intellectualis* into mathematical, physical, juridical, historical, logical, theological, philosophical, and what not slices, his editors, commentators, critics, and interpreters have mutilated its deepest meaning; what remains are his *disjecta membra*, the congeries of which presents only a distorted and fragmentary image of his original stature. Yet, unless and until the unity of his thought is restored, his work will remain one of the many corpses scattered along the roads of history, and though time and again its decomposed parts may have served and will continue to

[1] Onno Klopp's comprehensive edition had to be given up after the eleventh volume because the Prussian Government debarred the Catholic and Guelphic editor from the Library of Hanover.

serve as fertilizers for future harvests, the really original and profound essence of his work will never attain historic reality.

Leibniz's activity started with an acute criticism of Descartes' system, aiming precisely at that element which isolated the human individual and rendered its seemingly most certain knowledge contingent and devoid of any immanent foundation *in re*. If not only laws of nature, but even truths of reason repose on an unaccountable decree of God's inscrutable will, all knowledge becomes, indeed, at best a pragmatic implement and loses its dignity as an adequate, though imperfect, representation of the objective universe. The whole voluntaristic basis of Descartes' epistemology had, therefore, to be surrendered in order to restore to science the exalted role it had played in ancient Greece. Descartes' God was, indeed, still an absolute monarch whose will stood for reason and who did not owe to his subjects any other account for what he has decreed beyond the *car tel est mon plaisir*. He was *legibus solutus* like the princes of Descartes' time, and the motives he may have had for enacting his decrees did not have to be justifiable before Reason. Although openly opposing Aristotle in every possible respect, Descartes had yet accepted as axiom the doctrine of the Peripatetics according to which there is no ratio between the finite and the infinite. Since human understanding is finite and the Divine infinite, truth as conceived by human science can, therefore, not possibly bear any likeness to perfect truth as comprehended by the Divine Intellect. This is an assumption which, already shaken by Malebranche, was radically rejected by Leibniz. God, though still conceived of as the sovereign governor of the universe, now became a constitutional monarch, bound by the laws He has Himself enacted. And even though what is infinite in God is only finite in man, and human knowledge can, therefore, never reach perfection, it is nevertheless capable of participating adequately in the idea of the universe as conceived by the Divine Intellect. For Reason is one. The same reason which presided in shaping the archetype of the universe in the Divine Intellect, presides over man's strife for knowledge. The eternal truths or truths of reason, specifically, are the same for God as for man. He could not have created a universe in which two contradictory propositions would both be true or both false. The system of truths of reason, therefore, which is constituted by the principles of identity and contradiction and some other fundamental principles which immediately derive therefrom, adequately describes the objective order of any possible world which God might have created and consequently also of the one in which we are living. Truths of fact, on the contrary, as represented by the laws and constants of nature, are contingent: they might be entirely different from what experience discovers them to be, without their contrary implying contradiction. But they are not contingent in the sense of

depending upon an arbitrary decree of the Divine Will. Whereas eternal truths are logically necessary, truths of fact are morally necessary, i.e. their dependence upon the Divine Will renders them contingent upon a power which is determined by the norms of goodness and justice; just as the intelligence, which inspires this power, is determined by the principles of identity and contradiction. Here the natural limitation of the human intellect helps to explain why the laws of nature are seemingly contingent. Man's understanding, indeed, is able to embrace only an infinitesimal sector of the reality which spreads infinitely in time and space. If it were ever able to embrace the whole, the metaphysical and moral necessity of every detail would become as evident as the necessity of any mathematical theorem is to the mathematician who realizes its derivation from necessary axioms. Leibniz often availed himself of a very suggestive metaphor in order to show that what, considered isolatedly, appears contingent, is understood as necessary within the context of the whole. If out of a symphony a listener heard only one bar which might happen to include a dissonance or even a cacophony, he would consider it as contingent, arbitrary, and senseless; if, however, he listened to the whole, he would realize the aesthetic necessity of the detail. So also the laws and constants of nature may appear arbitrary and contingent to our limited understanding, while their moral necessity would become evident if we knew the whole plan of the universe, which in itself is not contingent either, but the necessary product of Divine Reason and Divine Justice operating conjointly.

Evidently this conception of knowledge not only provides science with a foundation *in re*, but at the same time extricates the human individual from his isolation and integrates him into the order of one humanity and one universe. Since reason is one and since every human being participates in it to a certain variable degree, the potential community of mankind is guaranteed, in so far as knowledge is concerned, by this common participation in reason. This assumption also forms the basis of the irenic attempts which Leibniz pursued throughout his lifetime. Every system of knowledge being constituted as such by the acceptance of first principles of reason, none can be without any value and no two can be entirely incommensurable. All the various scientific and philosophical systems are as many aspects of the universe seen from different viewpoints, and only the integration of all of them would overcome the partiality and onesidedness which is the necessary consequence of human limitation, and would approach the universality of a complete and perfect representation of the world. Sectarianism, the dogmatism of the schools along with their ensuing intolerance, and quarrels like that of the Ancients and the Moderns appear, therefore, as an apostasy from the universality of reason and as subservience to the

particularism of the irrational element of human nature. If Aristotelianism and Cartesianism, Platonism and Epicureanism are all called philosophical or scientific systems, they must, indeed, have something in common, be it but the identity of the object which they represent from various viewpoints. According to Leibniz, there are, therefore, no two doctrines which would not be reconcilable if reason were accepted as the arbiter.

III

The overcoming of Descartes' voluntarism or rather the reconciliation of voluntarism and intellectualism achieved by Leibniz appeared in still another point of doctrine. According to Descartes and his followers, including Malebranche, judgment was not to be considered as an operation of the intellect, but as a decision of the will consenting to the data prepared for it by the understanding. Error, therefore, was conceived as a shortcoming of the will acquiescing to insufficiently elaborated ideas. Hence the gradual elimination of error appeared not as a task incumbent upon a formal training of the understanding, but, as it were, on a moral training of human will power. The Stoic and Baconian suspension of judgment recommended anew by Descartes whenever the intellect has not exhaustively investigated the object, or has found it to exceed the reach of human understanding, this suspension was, indeed, a means of disciplining the will rather than a pattern of method.

The voluntaristic hypothesis explains the utter contempt in which formal logic was held by Descartes and his followers.[1] A characteristic consequence of both the subjective criterium of truth and the demotion of logic appeared in a treatise imbued with Cartesian spirit, the famous *Logique de Port-Royal*, by Arnauld and Nicole, which presents a paradoxical example of a textbook maintaining the uselessness of the discipline it is designed to teach. As a matter of fact, the authors of the *Logique* did not discover this consequence, but adopted it from St. Augustine. A knowledge of logic, they declared,[2] is just as useless to right thinking as a knowledge of the laws of dynamics is to walking. If you tried consciously to walk according to the laws of dynamics, you would most likely stumble at every step. And similarly knowledge of the laws of logic will impede your "natural" sense of truth guided by the original feeling of evidence.

On both grounds Leibniz rigorously opposed the Cartesians. Though he did not expressly deal with the seemingly convincing

[1] Cf. P. Schrecker, *La méthode cartésienne et la logique* ("Revue Philosophique," 1937, pp. 336–367). The relevant passages are indicated in this article, the most revealing being the tenth of the *Regulae ad directionem ingenii*.

[2] *Logique de Port-Royal*, Partie III, chapitre 17.

analogy proposed by the *Logique de Port-Royal*, it is clear what he would have replied to it. Of course, he would have contended, we do not need knowledge of the laws of dynamics to walk safely. But if we wish to advance more quickly, or more safely, or more economically than we are able to with our own natural resources, we must needs investigate the laws of dynamics and, thus equipped, devise machines which will help us to make headway far beyond our natural capacities.

This metaphor may well represent the role Leibniz assigned to logic and the means he envisaged to avoid error.[1] Clarity and distinctness, as well as evidence, are, indeed, but subjective criteria of truth. What is evident to one individual may be doubtful and controvertible to another. In fact, all scientific divisions and discussions arise from the fact that what appears clear and distinct to one intelligence appears as obscure and confused to others. We have, however, but to imitate the procedure followed by the one science which is the least subject to debate, namely mathematics, in order to invent a means of eliminating the subjective and unreliable criteria of truth. Mathematical errors can, indeed, hardly be accounted for by shortcomings of the will which has consented to insufficiently investigated data. They mostly originate in simple miscalculations, i.e. in insufficient attention being paid to the established forms of operation, or in some false application of the forms of reasoning which are valid *per se* but do not fit the given problem. Will and consent cannot be blamed for such errors unless lack of attention is considered a shortcoming of the will. Whereas, however, the right application of the right form of reasoning guarantees the truth of the result, even the utmost amount of attention and the most scrupulous will are incapable of rendering the same service, if the right forms have not been established beforehand.

By assuming a pre-eminent function in Leibniz's system of knowledge, logic had completely changed its traditional character. It was no longer identical with the canon of Aristotelian dialectics which had but slightly changed during the course of almost two millenniums and which Descartes had fought so insistently. It was no longer the instrument of classification derived from descriptive biology. In Leibniz's thought it was modelled on the pattern of mathematical deduction and designed to cover all reasoning operating by virtue of form alone.[2] Obviously, this approach involved a momentous shift

[1] Cf. in particular Leibniz's *Nouveaux Essais*, livre IV, chap. XVII, and *Philosophische Schriften*, ed. Gerhardt, VII, pp. 512 sq.

[2] Cf. the *Nouveaux Essais*, ibid: "By *arguments in form*, I mean not merely this scholastic argument used in colleges, but all reasoning which concludes by the force of the form. . . . Algebraic calculation, and infinitesimal analysis, will be for me almost arguments in form, because their form of reasoning has been predemonstrated, so that we are certain not to be deceived thereby" (Langley's translation, p. 559).

of the fulcrum of knowledge. Whereas according to the Cartesian school individual feeling of evidence and consecutive consent had authenticated knowledge, now compliance with a trans-subjective, unpsychological, and objectively controllable pattern had to provide the legitimation and the vehicle for the advancement of science. Since, according to Leibniz, reason is common to all men while will is the factor which individuates them, the elimination of the latter from all cognitive function means a weakening of the individualistic motive and a strengthening of the unifying function of rationalism. The epistemological consequences of these divergencies cannot be followed up here. One socially important aspect of Leibniz's formalistic approach should, however, receive short consideration.

The ideal instance of reasoning by virtue of form only is presented by mathematical algorisms. They facilitate operations which, if performed intuitively, in view of the contents instead of in compliance with formal rules, would go far beyond the reach of the human thinking capacity. What makes these mathematical algorisms possible is the use of a characteristic language, of a language marked by a one-by-one relation between symbols and signified ideas, so that the result of formal operations performed on, and expressed in, symbols, may be re-translated into ideas whenever this proves desirable. The replacement of ideas by symbols and of relations of ideas by operations on symbols is so complete that a machine may perform these operations more accurately and more economically than the most perfect mathematician.[1] This is the idea on which reposes Leibniz's invention of the calculating machine, as well as his attempts at inventing a characteristic language, constructed after the model of mathematical algorisms, which was to open to reasoning by virtue of form many a field in which reasoning by virtue of content had heretofore been the unique method of invention and discovery.

This project of devising a characteristic universal language designed to facilitate reasoning by virtue of form in practically all fields of knowledge, had been forgotten for almost two centuries; and, although revived by modern symbolic logic, its reincarnation in the latter school has completely changed its character. Two essential roots of this idea have, indeed, been severed by the prevailingly positivistic approach to the problem adopted by contemporary logic. The one is the metaphysical conception upon which the idea of a characteristic universal language is directly dependent in Leibniz's project; the other is the Baconian idea according to which usefulness and truth are but two aspects of one and the same structure. With regard to the first factor, the idea of discovering truth through reasoning by virtue of form rested on the metaphysical assumption

[1] This is why Leibniz called those symbols *Machinae spirituales* (*Philosophischer Briefwechsel*, ed. Prussian Academy, I, p. 229).

that the order of the universe as conceived by the Divine Intellect is a rational one. What is immediately accessible to our experience is a cryptogram translating the original order and meaning of the universe into ciphers. If we were to discover the key determining the ciphering, we would be able to decipher the cryptogram and to discover the original meaning of the book of nature. In so far as the truths of reason are concerned, that is, the order this world has in common with all possible worlds God might have created, the key is provided by the principle of contradiction and its derivations, along with the entire system of mathematics. As to the truths of fact, that is, the invariant laws of transformation which single out the existing world from among the merely possible worlds, experience is required to discover the key. This experience, however, is not always identical with what is commonly called induction. Leibniz believed that essential relations in the order of the existing world might be discovered by exploring, not the result of the divine selection from among the possible worlds, but the principles which guided His selection. Thus, the principles of knowledge called architectonic[1] by Leibniz in contrast to the mechanical principles, are not discovered by induction from experiences and experiments, but through the application of rational principles which are not logically necessary according to the principle of contradiction, but whose contrary would imply an imperfection of the Divine Intellect and Will which were guided by them in selecting the world to be created. The principles of continuity, of conservation, of the identity of indiscernibles, and the principle of least action are such architectonic principles and keys which allow us to read the text of nature. If, to refer to but one example, we take for granted that it would be an imperfection of the Divine Will to attain effects by more than the necessary expenditure, we are authorized to state that all natural effects are reached by a minimum expenditure. Using this principle which Malebranche had called the "Economy of Nature,"[2] and which later became the principle of least action, Leibniz demonstrated in 1682 that the fundamental laws of optics, catoptrics, and dioptrics may be rationally deduced from the principle that light always travels along the shortest, or easiest, or most definite path.[3]

It is clear that wherever such principles are available, the method which provides mathematics with algorisms may be usefully applied.

[1] *De rerum originatione radicali* (*Philos. Schriften*, ed. Gerhardt, VII, pp. 302 sq.).

[2] *Recherche de la Vérité*, vol. 3, 1678, dernier Eclaircissement. This Eclaircissement was suppressed in later editions and therefore escaped the attention of the historians of the principle of least action.

[3] *Unicum opticae, catoptricae et dioptricae principium*, first published in *Acta Eruditorum*, 1682, pp. 185–190, reprinted in *Opera*, ed. Dutens, III, pp. 145 sq. Cf. the *Nouveaux Essais*, livre IV, chap. 7, § 15.

Wherever we succeed in discovering the invariant elements of change, in bringing them into a one-by-one relation with appropriate symbols and in deducing operational rules to be applied to these symbols, we may establish formal reasoning capable of carrying the human intellect far beyond the limits of its natural scope. If, in this case, we still speak of reasoning by virtue of form, the term continues to be used though genuine reasoning is no longer actually taking place. It is, indeed, the very function of algorisms that, once they are established, and as far as their reach goes, they make reasoning superfluous. Operations on symbols which are so strictly ruled by algorisms that a machine may perform them more reliably and more economically than any human mind, can in truth hardly be called reasoning proper. And the ultimate aim of Leibniz's characteristic universal language was, indeed, to produce a symbolism and an operational code, in short, algorisms, which would relieve the human intellect of all procedures wherein reasoning can be replaced by running machines.[1]

The rationality of the universe which facilitates reasoning by virtue of form and the method of discovering truths of fact without induction had still another bearing on Leibniz' conception of science. Lord Francis Bacon had inaugurated an idea of truth which was opposed to the scholastic tradition. "Fruits and works," he wrote,[2] "are as it were sponsors and sureties for the truth of philosophies." And in terms which at first sound as though voiced by a modern pragmatist, he claimed that "truth and utility are the very same things; and works themselves are of greater value as pledges of truth than as contributing to the comforts of life."[3] This interpretation of the relation between scientific theory and technological application remained in the *Novum Organum* in a more or less aphoristic state because it still lacked the metaphysical background necessary to endow it with epistemological significance. Leibniz's idea of the rational archetype of the universe implies as a necessary consequence that every truth developed by formal reasoning represents actually existing relations. "The value and even the mark of true science," he wrote to Malebranche in June 1679, "consists in my opinion in the useful inventions which can be derived from it." This is by no means a pragmatist or utilitarian conception of truth. Whereas a utilitarian would claim that truth is an epiphenomenon of usefulness, it would be more correct, in Leibniz's sense, to affirm that usefulness

[1] Leibniz expected that, due to the invention of the characteristic language, *"raisonner et calculer sera la même chose"* (*Opuscules*, ed. Couturat, pp. 27–28). Cf. *Philos. Schr.*, ed. Gerhardt, VII, p. 25: *"reduire tous les raisonnements à une espèce de calcul."*

[2] *Novum Organum*, Aphorism lxxiii.

[3] Ibid., Aphorism cxxiv.

is a necessary epiphenomenon of truth. Because his conception of arithmetic was true, Leibniz was enabled by it to construct a calculating machine. The technological application of the theory had a merely confirmative and by no means a constitutive function.

There is a close relation between the invention of algorisms which was the aim of Leibniz's endeavours in logic and the useful inventions referred to in the letter to Malebranche. Disregarding the metaphysical and epistemological background and envisaging only the function of algorisms in human history, we may understand the paramount importance Leibniz attributed to this invention. Useful knowledge consists, indeed, of truths susceptible of being transformed into efficient patterns of conduct, which may be complied with, without any actual reasoning taking place. The operator of a slide rule, or a spectroscope, or a calculating machine, is not required to do any reasoning. Yet the algorisms embodied in the machine he is handling enable him to produce the knowledge needed for some definite purpose. He would be unable to obtain this knowledge if dependent solely upon his own reasoning, or it would take him a lifetime.

The construction of algorisms or of similar expedients designed to enlarge the capacity of the human mind was the leading idea in Leibniz's essays towards a characteristic language. This social perspective of scientific research was one of the marks which distinguished his philosophy from that of Descartes. Not only was reason conceived of by him as the unifying power which binds mankind together, but it was also considered conducive to the improvement of human work, so that the achievements of mankind united under the realm of reason might by far exceed the sum total of the capacities of human individuals taken isolatedly. Just as historic language by facilitating the expression, communication, and preservation of thought, and often by superseding actual thought, increases the efficiency of human work in the several provinces of civilization and permits the accumulation of past knowledge and its spreading through time and space; so the characteristic universal language would unify mankind and increase its efficiency far beyond any level reasoning by virtue of contents could ever hope to attain.

Any consideration of the role of logic in Leibniz's system as indicative of a pan-logistic doctrine in which reasoning by virtue of form could supersede reasoning by virtue of content, or creative thinking, as it might be called, would, however, amount to a serious misunderstanding. For if the construction of algorisms actually appeared as the aim of scientific work, their construction was not in itself conceived of as being achieved through reasoning by virtue of form, but as presupposing "intuitive" thinking, reasoning in terms of things. Even if, as he believed, an algorism could be invented which would

produce algorisms—a machine which would invent other machines—the operational mechanism would, he realized, at some point or at some level of thought cease to be of any avail, and creative thinking would again be required. Had the characteristic universal language actually been invented, this creative act might have proved to be of such immense power that, within its reach, the actual use of reason might indeed have been superseded by machines. Recent research in the field of formal logic itself seems, however, to have excluded this possibility and thereby to have rehabilitated reason as the sovereign instrument of knowledge. Yet, it should be recognized that the ever-increasing mechanization of intellectual life reposes, at bottom, on the ever-increasing number and sway of available algorisms. It is a strange paradox of the modern mind that its greatest and most admirable instruments serve to cut off its own thread of life—a direct consequence of its having severed the transcendent anchorage which, in Leibniz's thought, still supported the very use of algorisms.

IV

Yet, reason alone, even if conceived of in its widest sense, is not an instrument which can draw the individual out of his isolation and organize the community of mankind. It can, at best, achieve an adequate and common representation of the formal order of the world and thereby, as Francis Bacon stated,[1] "establish and extend the power and dominion of the human race itself over the universe." But it cannot by itself alone establish the ultimate aims for which this power and dominion ought to be exerted.

Already the selection of the actual world for creation out of the infinite number of possible worlds had engaged a faculty distinguished from God's intellect, namely, the Divine Will. Just as the Divine Intellect was understood as determined by the principles of identity and contradiction, the Divine Will was understood by Leibniz as determined by the principle of justice. The close correlation between logic and ethics in the Leibnizian system was founded on the correlation of two divine perfections. As a matter of fact, this dualism is the result of a merely conceptional distinction. Infinite intellect and infinite justice are in truth only two aspects of one and the same indivisible Divine Substance, considered in its two functions of representing the world and of governing it. It is, therefore, understandable that Leibniz emphasized the transcendent foundation in the field of action just as in the field of knowledge. Whereas Descartes, in so far as he had tried at all to complete his system by including a moral philosophy, had arrived at a more or less christianized Stoicism, overcoming the isolation into which the original Stoa had morally

[1] *Novum Organum*, Aphorism cxxix.

confined the individual by means of a secularized idea of the Christian community, Leibniz avoided this isolation by his very choice of a starting point. And just as Descartes, in order to overcome the individualistic consequence of his epistemological principle, had to resort to divine veracity, so any moral philosophy which starts with the isolated individual must remain unable to provide a solid foundation for the moral community of mankind, unless it submits the individual, right after having liberated him from all human authority, to an inscrutable Divine Will intervening as a despotic moral legislator. Leibniz avoided this alternative by not choosing his starting point in the individual intellect in so far as knowledge was concerned, nor in the individual will in so far as principles of action were being sought.

Just as the eternal truths of reason did not depend upon a divine decree, so also the principles of justice did not derive their validity from a decision of the Divine Will, but, on the contrary, like the eternal truths, presided over the creation and government of the world. No principle is true or just because God decreed it to be so; but God complied with certain principles realizing that they were true or just independently from His Will. The principles of justice like the first principles of knowledge are not, therefore, rooted in the unfathomable decree of some tyrannical power, but, independently from any power which may, or may not, follow them, in the idea of justice itself.

We may wonder how a man like Leibniz, so thoroughly experienced not only in theoretical research, but also in world history, diplomacy, and jurisprudence, was able to adopt a conception of justice to which the very experiences he had gathered in these fields must constantly have run counter. While the universality and the progress of theoretical science might, to a certain extent, have justified his idea concerning the reality and reliability of theoretical reason, no such actual progress could apparently be affirmed—without some preconceived bias—in so far as human actions were concerned. Yet, strangely enough, it was precisely in his Preface to a compilation of historical and diplomatic documents that Leibniz expressed his conception of justice most emphatically and solemnly.

Were some similar epitome of ancient works on geometry to exist, it would certainly be possible, by analysing them, to find some common principles of logic and method with which all of them complied. Even though the analysed works might no longer be fully acceptable to us, we would be able to state that a number of fundamental norms which they diversely specified, are still valid in our present-day geometry. Thus, it would appear that some constitutive principle, say, the principle of contradiction, is common to all systems which figure as events in that history of geometry. Now, to what analogy could we refer in the history of human relations? Where is the

starting point that would correspond in the social field to the first and unquestionable principles which secured the progress of our knowledge?

A superficial survey would detect only one principle generally and universally obeyed, a principle which is a denial of justice rather than its affirmation, namely, that might breaks right. A more thorough analysis, however, led Leibniz towards rejecting such sceptical and cynical objections and forcefully to maintain the analogy between reason and justice. In the instance of the history of geometry, the permanent principles are formal rather than material; similarly also in the ever-changing field of social relations Leibniz discovered formal principles of justice, the specific content of which may vary, and indeed varied constantly during the course of history, which, moreover, were violated time and again by positive law as well as by the actual conduct and condition of man, but which, nevertheless, remain the only principles capable of founding human society and directing it towards the general good. And just as the shortcomings of geometrical systems of the past may be reduced to neglect or to false applications of fundamental principles valid *per se*, so, in general, the evils and misfortunes of mankind may be reduced to neglect or to false applications of valid first principles of justice.

Which are the alleged principles of justice called upon to unify human society, analogous to the principles of reason to which the gradual unification of our knowledge is due? Leibniz first proclaimed a universal principle, namely, that everything must be directed towards the general good. This supreme norm is specified and articulated by three more particular principles derived from classical Roman jurisprudence and which correspond to the three traditional degrees of justice: Strict law commands: *Neminem laedere*—to harm no one. Equity commands: *Suum cuique tribuere*—to grant to everyone what is his. Universal justice, called piety by Leibniz and morals in our modern terminology, commands: *Honeste vivere*—to live honestly.[1] These principles, evidently, are merely formal, not material. Like truths of reason which only grasp the order of things, not their substance, the principles of justice only rule the order of actions, not their contents. This formalism seems to involve a fundamental weakness. For, if the common aim of these principles is to direct human actions towards the general good, they fail to teach us what is the general good. Even Leibniz's attempt to elucidate this basis by defining justice as the conduct of a *vir bonus*,[2] is scarcely of any avail since every age and civilization has produced a different ideal typifying the *vir bonus*.

[1] *Codicis Juris Gentium Praefatio* (*Werke*, ed. O. Klopp, VI, pp. 457 sq.) Cf. *Mittheilungen aus Leibnizens ungedruckten Schriften*, ed. Mollat, pp. 5, 8, etc.

[2] Ibid.

Here again, however, the analogy to the truths of reason may serve as a clue. The principle of contradiction, for instance, indicates a requirement for the admission of a proposition into the scientific system, but it discovers no such proposition. Nor does non-contradiction suffice in determining facts; it only facilitates the construction of a method organizing factual experience into one single and consistent system of knowledge. The principles of justice, too, are not meant to determine human actions directly and immediately, but only to reign supreme over the legislation and government of civilized communities. If, and in so far as, the latter do not comply with these principles of justice, the society ruled by them is no civilized community, but only a factual association, ethically undistinguishable from animal associations or from organized bands of criminals bound together by fear or egoistical interests.

This consideration points toward the existence of a generative principle of civilized life in society, which may prove to be but another form or application of the principle of contradiction. Could a system of government or of law, constituted by maxims diametrically opposed to the principles of justice actually be conceived? Could a genuine civilization, reposing on the right to mutual infliction of harm or violation of property be imagined? Such a civilization would also be bound to involve a moral duty to live dishonestly. It would consider as virtuous to be without virtue, and as good anything detrimental to the common weal. A more obvious contradiction in terms can hardly be imagined. Thus, the definition of actions which are considered an unrightful harm or a violation of property rights may be variable. This variableness, however, by no means depreciates the validity of the principles themselves, the less so since the same reservation applies to the truths of reason. The ratio between the diameter and circumference of a circle is a transcendent number, whether or not anything at all resembling a circle exists in the realm of nature; and if a circle exists, the ratio by no means depends upon the material which exhibits a circular shape.

The power of the truths of reason appears most conspicuously by the very absurdity of the effect of their having been neglected. So also is the power of the sovereign principles of justice most strikingly evinced in the very instance of their most flagrant transgression, by the tendency of the transgressor to cloak his action in the guise of pseudo-principles of justice, such as the absurd "necessity knows no law"—which itself pretends to be a law of justice.

Leibniz frequently defined, or rather personified, justice as *caritas sapientis*, the charity or benevolence of the wise.[1] The alliance of

[1] *Leibniz und Landgraf Ernst von Hessen-Rheinfels.* Ein ungedruckter Briefwechsel, ed. Chr. v. Rommel, 1847, Vol. II, p. 233: "*Justitia est charitas sapientis*, c'est-à-dire une charité, qui est conforme à la sagesse, et *charitas est benevolentia generalis.*"

reason and goodness in the person of the sage was thus raised to the rank of the ideal expected to guide the progress of civilization as well as each member's participation in it. By accepting this ideal, man, according to Leibniz, lives up to the image of God after which he has been created. "Indeed," he wrote,[1] "His goodness and justice as well as His wisdom are different from ours only because they are infinitely more perfect."

The affinity of this political philosophy to genuine Platonic traditions needs no emphasis; the main difference being that while Plato was concerned with the selection of persons to hold power, Leibniz was preoccupied with the principles which were to guide them. Here, as in so many other respects, thinking in terms of functions had gradually superseded the search for substances or hypostases. Leibniz no longer concurred with the idea that the State should be governed by philosophers. What he envisaged was a human community constituted and ruled by laws complying with the basic principles of reason and justice—whatever legislative and executive organs might be in charge of specifying and carrying out these supreme norms in view of ever-changing historical conditions.

V

The application of these principles to the organization of social life, that is, to the actualization of the community of mankind, followed the same pattern as the application of the truths of reason to the construction of a consistent system of knowledge. Just as no two contradictory propositions can be allowed to co-exist in one and the same system of science, so also can no irreconcilable conflict between individuals and communities, nations, or churches be tolerated under the reign of the principles of justice, since it could be expected eventually to impede or to rupture the postulated unity and to degenerate into a contest of brute force. But the use of constraint and persecution exercised for the purpose of overpowering an antagonistic doctrine or claim is always an infallible symptom of a defection from reason and justice and, consequently, from civilization.

Leibniz's childhood and adult life were overshadowed by the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War. To whatever field of human affairs he turned, he observed moral and material devastation. The Peace of Westphalia, concluded when he was two years old, had not succeeded in eradicating the seeds of discontent which repeatedly during his lifetime were to generate new wars. The main ideological conflict had been, and still was, the schism between the Christian Churches, Roman Catholic and Protestant, and the rivalry of the Protestant Churches, Lutheran and Calvinist, among themselves. True, the ideological dissension served sometimes merely as a screen for

[1] *Philos. Schr.*, ed. Gerhardt, VI, p. 51.

dynastic power politics. When it appeared expedient, Cardinal Richelieu, for instance, never hesitated to underhandedly support the German Protestant Princes against their Catholic sovereign. Those, however, who did the actual fighting, suffered and died in the firm belief they were fighting for or against the cause of Papacy, for or against the doctrines of predestination or of the real presence of the Body of Christ in the Host. Our economic determinists are used to arguing that the actual causes of these wars of religion were by no means religious, but economic or political. If this were true, we would have to reckon Leibniz among the foremost victims of insidious "propaganda." From his twentieth year to the time of his death, he fervently devoted himself to reconciling the Churches because he veritably believed their conflicts to be the causes of wars. Yet, Leibniz was no layman in politics, he knew the inside version of diplomatic intrigues and occasionally played an influential part on the international scene. He was, moreover, a critical historian, by no means disposed naïvely to taking political camouflage at its face value. If he nevertheless considered religious discord as at least one of the primary causes of the contemporary wars, he has to be accepted as a witness whose trustworthiness and competence cannot easily be overruled. Maybe, in so far as the respective dynasts, ecclesiastic as well as secular, were concerned, their religious passions were only masks; but would these potentates have succeeded in luring their peoples to the shambles, had the masses, at least, not believed it worth while dying for their religious convictions?

The history of Leibniz's attempts at actualizing the reunion of the Christian Churches has often been told, though many important documents still remain unpublished.[1] The principles, however, which inspired this activity have hardly ever been clarified. On the one hand, each of the many churches, denominations, and sects believed itself to be the genuine and exclusive depository of the true Christian revelation. On the other hand, there could hardly be more than one, at least in so far as fundamental tenets, such as the dogma of transubstantiation, were concerned. Hence, the problem arose as to whether the divergencies dividing the several religious communities were fundamental and presented an unsurmountable obstacle to the union of all Christians in one oecumenic church. What instrument could have been of greater avail to the purpose of resolving this question than universal reason, and what norm more competent to rule the relations between the churches than the idea of justice defined by Leibniz as "what complies with wisdom and goodness joined together?"[2] Rational analysis thus, in fact, became

[1] Cf. *Lettres et fragments inédits sur les problèmes de la réconciliation des doctrines protestantes*, publ. par. P. Schrecker, Paris, 1934.

[2] *Schriften*, ed. Mollat, p. 48.

the method Leibniz applied to the principal litigations of the Christian churches. The conclusion he reached was that the doctrinal antagonism was, to a great extent, merely verbal and that whatever genuine dogmatic discrepancies subsisted, were not fundamental and did not present any real obstacle to reconciliation. Since the Roman Catholic Church, without serious prejudice to its unity, contained within its pale doctrines as divergent as those of the Jesuits and the Jansenists, he concluded that oecumenic Christian unity, if actualized, would not necessarily demand complete uniformity of doctrine, institution, and ritual. The idea of monads may here fittingly be applied to illustrate a relation of the churches which, as early as the twelfth century, had parabolically been expressed by free-thinkers in the well-known Fable of the Three Rings. Just as every monad diversely represents the same universe from different viewpoints, so each church also represents the same Divine Institution, though each represents it from a very different viewpoint, dependent upon variable historic, national, intellectual, and emotional factors. That this was indeed Leibniz's idea, appeared when he once proposed the text of a prayer to Antoine Arnauld, which, he claimed, could be used without scruple not only by all Christians, but by Jews as well.

He, therefore, considered schisms contrary to reason and their effects, religious wars and the atrocious persecutions of heretics and nonconformists, contrary to justice. "I believe," he wrote to Father des Bosses,[1] "that persecutions against doctrines which do not instigate crime are the worst things of all and that one should not only abstain therefrom, but strive to make them execrated by those over whom one has some authority. It is permissible to refuse honours and advantages, to which they are not entitled, to those whose doctrines we deem harmful. But I do not think it permissible to confiscate their property and still less to use rigour against them in the form of proscription, chains, the galleys, and evils still worse. Is this not, indeed, a species of violence which the victim could not escape but by a crime, to wit, by forswearing what he believes to be true? The greater a man's value the more he will suffer under this tyranny."

Religious wars may have lost their timeliness since the period when Leibniz strove to pacify the religious conflicts which had engendered them. Unfortunately for us, however, ideological antagonisms have not subsided, but are still being used to provide at least sham pretexts for periodic warfare. Yet, everything Leibniz denounced as contrary to reason and justice in the religious struggles of his time, still holds more true in respect to the ideological divergencies which later replaced them. New dogmatic

[1] *Philos. Schr.*, ed. Gerhardt, II, p. 337 (original text in Latin).

credos, under whatever economic, philosophic, or political trademark they may have been circulated, do not even share the incomparably higher dignity of religious tenets nor their legitimate claim for universality. No other means of pacifying the world has ever been proposed from which greater success might be expected than from a recourse to the universal ideas of reason and justice, as recommended by Leibniz. The only other alternative is recourse to brute force—a crime against civilization, whatever its ideological pretexts may be. "War," wrote Leibniz,[1] "is a state wherein the intention of fighting by force for the purpose of obtaining some thing is avowed. If we could believe that God would always grant victory to the just cause, war would be an appeal to Divine Judgment, or a kind of decision by lot. God, however, for other and stronger reasons, may allow the unjust cause to outweigh. This is why an appeal to Divine Judgment amounts to tempting God, just as though, starting with the erroneous premise that God cannot allow evil, someone were to test whether there is a God and whether He is just." But since it is not always true that *victrix causa diis placuit*, it is up to man to create institutions which will render the victory of the unjust cause more difficult and less likely to occur. Has this not been the aim of the rule of law among individuals, and should it prove impossible to attain the same goal in the relations of the several nations *inter se?*

What terminated primeval war of all against all and facilitated the establishment of civilized society organized in the State was, indeed, the reign of law which, carrying out the fundamental principles referred to above, forbade the harming of anyone, guaranteed to each the possession of his own, and aimed at the common good. Thus, the State became the organon of reason and justice. "The aim of political science with respect to the doctrine concerning the forms of government," wrote Leibniz,[2] "ought to be to promote the flowering of the authority of reason. . . . Arbitrary power is the form of government directly opposed to the authority of reason." So far as the reign of civilization reaches, Reason itself claims authority over the authority of persons. It would, indeed, be blasphemous to exempt a despot from the laws of justice and reason which, according to Leibniz, the Creator and Supreme Governor of the world is Himself, by His own nature, bound to respect. Leibniz was well aware of the dangers involved in an autocratic regime, since he stated[3] that the insomnia of a despot and his resultant bad temper have frequently incited decisions which have brought destruction to myriads of human beings. On the other hand, Leibniz was just as opposed to granting boundless

[1] *Opuscules*, ed. Couturat, p. 507 (Latin).
[2] Ed. Gerhardt, III, p. 277.
[3] *Cod. Jur. Gent. Praefatio*, loc. cit.

freedom to the citizens. "True liberty," he wrote,[1] "is one of the greatest treasures of human nature; but inferior to reason. Liberty, indeed, should be nothing but the capacity of following reason."

This conception of liberty which followed a very ancient tradition was not limited by Leibniz to the inter-relationship of the citizens of a State, but applied equally to the relations of sovereign nations. Sovereignty in itself is nothing but the liberty of States in international relations, and should, therefore, yield to reason. The isolation of sovereign States is, indeed, or should be, a merely natural condition, even though throughout the centuries it has been misinterpreted as a jural condition. As a consequence, peace between the powers has, as Leibniz expressed it,[2] always been like the intermission in a fight between gladiators when they stop for a breathing spell. If the human race wishes to replace this state of nature by instituting an organization in which the inter-relationship of nations, just as the relationship between individuals, shall be ruled by law, it will have to abandon the irrational *noli-me-tangere* conception of sovereignty. "Just as when the State is constituted by men who have not formerly been bound by obligations," Leibniz wrote,[3] "each one binds himself by a common tie, so also the several sovereign powers, as though they were that many free persons, may accept a common tie, be it by law, custom, or a declaration of their wills." Such a covenant of nations would, of course, like the law system of a State, have to be controlled by the principles of reason and justice. National sovereignty, indeed, may be vindicated only if, and in so far as, it is required by these very principles. The conflict, therefore, more than ever acute to-day, between the ideas of national sovereignty and international law is only one symptom of the seesawing struggle for hegemony between the universalism of reason and justice and the particularism of contingent "natural" interests; in more general terms, between civilization and nature. So long as the two ideas of sovereignty and law are not harmoniously integrated into one single and world-wide jural pattern, civilization cannot claim to have won the battle.

VI

Assuming that the peaceful integration of the world is demanded by reason and justice, the problem of devising a means to this end is not philosophic, but political. Two methods present themselves for its solution. The first is analytical: to develop explicitly whatever reciprocal obligations may, at a given point of time, be actually implied in international relations, in the form either of treaties or of

[1] Ed. Gerhardt, III, p. 278.
[2] *Cod. Jur. Gent. Praefatio*, loc. cit.
[3] *Opera*, ed. Dutens, IV, p. 270 sq. (Latin).

usage, and upon this basis to erect a consistent system of international law. There is, on the other hand, the possibility of proceeding synthetically by establishing a universal organization of civilized States to be ruled by a charter performing the function exerised by a constitution in the lawful life of any single State. Leibniz was primarily concerned with the first method requiring the instruments used by historians and jurists. But he by no means neglected the possibility of political synthesis. The first result of his endeavour to codify international law as it had been evolved in those days was his *Codex Juris Gentium Diplomaticus* of 1693, which was followed in 1700 by a supplement, the *Mantissa*. These folios contain the most important international treaties concluded since the eleventh century, and their interest, therefore, seems to be mainly historical. Leibniz's intention, however, as expressed in the famous Preface to the first volume,[1] was not that of an erudite reviewing the past, but of a political philosopher striving to draw guiding ideas for the future from the experiences of this past. It might seem at first as though, in the case at issue, the experience tended to be utterly discouraging. Most of the mutual agreements printed in the Codex had not been abrogated by the common consent of the contracting parties, but had suffered death by violence. Far from testifying to the value of international law, this graveyard of broken promises appeared rather to be a monument to the powerlessness of law in international relations. Pacts between sovereign States, it seemed to teach, were allowed to remain in force only so long as the stronger party wishes to recognize their validity. Yet, according to Leibniz, such sceptical conclusion is unduly rash. To persist in it would, in fact, be as unwary as to abandon scientific research on the ground that its history may with equal right be considered a chronicle of false theories. The lack of any coercive power capable of enforcing respect for international obligations does not, in fact, depreciate international law any more than errors committed by the application of imperfect methods discredit the usefulness of method in general. The voluntary concluding of compacts between sovereign States intrinsically implies the recognition of an international law demanding compliance with contractual obligations, qualifying breaches of promise as unlawful and unjust, and thereby proving that the claimed sovereignty has actually suffered definite restrictions. The principle of justice, according to which any such infraction must be considered unjust, derives directly from the first principles proposed by Leibniz. Nothing, indeed, could be more flagrantly incompatible with the *suum cuique tribuere* than to refuse a State what has been contractually recognized as its due. Nothing could be more strikingly at variance with the *neminem laedere* than

[1] *Vide supra*, page 221.

to inflict upon a State evils from which his contracting partner had expressly pledged himself to abstain. The first commandment of international law and the basis of all the others is therefore, according to Leibniz, the faithful observance of treaties. In the preface to the Codex he sarcastically rebuked those statesmen who, he declared, play with treaties as children with nuts.

To allege "obligations of honour" as excuses for the violation of the given word, was, in his eyes, not only unlawful, but dishonest. "All obligations of law," he wrote,[1] "are also obligations of honour, above all, those which derive from the pledged word. It is dishonest to violate them, even if exceptions might sometimes be found which, if taken in a strict sense, may be valid; yet they befit lawyers rather than princes. Honest people, the world at large, posterity, and our own conscience are not always satisfied with what may be valid in court." The same consideration holds true, as he noted in another passage,[2] if instead of alleged obligations of honour considerations of prestige are allowed to prevail over principles of justice.

As a consequence of this conception, Leibniz rejected Pufendorf's denial of the possibility that nations, by their agreements, create international law, since this denial was based exclusively on the lack of a superior power capable of enforcing the execution of contractual obligations. Those, indeed, wrote Leibniz,[3] "who base all obligations on constraint and consequently take power for the standard of law, relapse into the tyrannical definition of Plato's Thrasymachus who maintained justice to be but what pleased the most powerful." The invalidation of this argument at the same time disposes of the attempt to justify violations of international faith on the ground of an alleged moral law of the State functioning independently of that binding individuals. The so-called *reason of state*, systematically expounded by Machiavelli, and bashfully readmitted by our concontemporary statesmen under the pseudonym of expediency, pretends to justify unjust and even illegal decisions by reason of their usefulness to a whole nation. According to Leibniz, however, any such argument violates the very universality of the ideas of reason and justice. Any nation taking advantage of such an infraction thereby weakens the very foundation on which its right to existence exclusively reposes.

Loyalty was thus vested with the dignity of the capital virtue of statesmen. "To preach the love of peace," Leibniz wrote,[4] "when one makes others feel all the effects of war, to refuse allegation of rights, to refuse to consider modifications, to dictate equivalences and

[1] *Werke*, ed. Klopp, V, p. 253 (French).
[2] Ed. Gerhardt, VII, p. 509.
[3] Ibid., VI, p. 35. *Conf. Opera*, ed. Dutens, IV, 3, p. 275.
[4] *Werke*, ed. Klopp, V, p. 254 (French).

strict conditions; not to tolerate precautions taken by others in alliances or the levying of troops, openly to mock the given word, to pretend such reasons as one is wont to invent for the satisfaction of simple and stupid persons in order to ridicule them; to add chicanery to violence and insult to spoils; these are traits a thousand times worse than even ruin."

Yet, in spite of execrating war, Leibniz was not an abstract pacifist and very well realized the necessity of bringing all possible sacrifices to defence against aggression.[1] He even concerned himself with the technical details of mobilization and armament and violently opposed the use of inhuman arms which had at that time begun to be common. In 1692, he sent to some friends a Latin epigram[2] denouncing the perversion of the human mind which exerts its ingenuity in inventing new evils, and in particular describing artillery shells devised for the devastation of the Palatinate. In view of the sinister actuality of his complaint a prose translation of the poem may here seem appropriate:

> "What frenzy drives the human race? Flashes matching the sky's lightnings flare up, intermixed with infernal fire. Not satisfied with simple thunderbolts, the missiles hurled by man are pregnant with volleys. A second engine shoots from the mouth of the first, concealing many a bullet in its hollow womb.
>
> "To increase the horror, a monstrous mine comes flying, and the dire machine conveys an earthquake. Bursting houses, their walls and basements blown up, are scattered widely through space. Within a few hours the work of centuries is turned to ruin. For inventing evils we men are verily an ingenious flock. Phlegethon himself could loose no more pernicious thing upon our earth, nor was any craft ever worthier of the Stygian god."

Inventions of this kind were and are the ultimate consequences of sectarianism, be the dividing factor religious, political, economic, or, as it became after Leibniz's time, national; sectarianism which "consists in pretending that others should rule their conduct according to our own maxims instead of being satisfied with seeing everyone approach the principal aim."[3] The very universality of the ideas of reason and justice ought to prevent this aim from being conceived as the welfare of one nation, one race, or one class to be gained at the expense of the others. "Provided something of con-

[1] *Werke*, ed. Klopp, V, p. 617 sq.

[2] *In Bombos Epigramma* (*Werke*, ed. Klopp, V, p. 636). Bishop Bossuet to whom, among others, the epigram had been sent, answered ironically: "You have blasted the bombs, and your epigram directed against this thunderbolt should triumph over all that noise which it helps to forgive." (*Oeuvres de Leibniz*, ed. Foucher de Careil, 2nd ed., I, p. 422.)

[3] *Opera*, ed. Dutens, I, p. 740.

sequence is achieved," Leibniz wrote to a French friend,[1] "I do not care whether it originates in Germany or in France, for I desire the welfare of mankind." And in a letter to Count Golofkin, Chancellor to Czar Peter the Great, he declared:[2] "I do not discriminate against any one nation or party. And I would prefer to see the sciences blooming in Russia to seeing them poorly cultivated in Germany."

VII

Thus, the unifying function of reason and justice or, as we might express it in one word, civilization, is a direct consequence of the transcendent foundation of these ideas superseding Descartes' individualistic and voluntaristic starting point. In a historical perspective, Descartes' emancipation of knowledge from authority was a necessary step. The authority he dethroned, however, was essentially the authority of persons. Misinterpreting the scope of this liberation, he himself and his followers overlooked the fact that by endowing each individual with absolute autonomy in the field of knowledge, they disrupted the links which make science an achievement of civilized society. The autonomous subject of knowledge was left isolated in an atomized world of thought.

True, to attain certainty of knowledge, Descartes had first to fight for its freedom from the bonds of authority. But once this freedom had unconditionally been actualized, it became clear that certainty could be reached only by again yielding part of the newly won autonomy and making knowledge contingent upon an instance more tyrannical than any authority hitherto recognized, namely, God's inscrutable decree.

As a matter of fact, neither Descartes nor any of his followers ever actually observed the suspension of judgment theoretically required whenever no evidence emerged to elicit the individual's consent and when judgment could consequently be based only on the credit of some authority. Had they not understood their own warning merely hyperbolically, the history and dissemination of knowledge would have slowed down more than under any rule of authority. Each new individual setting out for the search of truth would have had to start afresh with the *cogito ergo sum*, and no further development would have been allowed simply to carry on from where tradition had left off. Moreover, any knowledge of facts, even the most primitive, such as descriptive geography and history, would have been—and to some extent actually was in the Cartesian school—barred from the field of knowledge, since its factual statements had unavoidably to be accepted on the credit of some authority.

[1] *Philos. Schr.*, ed. Gerhardt, VII, p. 456.
[2] *Oeuvres*, ed. Foucher de Careil, VII, p. 503.

Complete certainty of knowledge and complete freedom from authority thus appear to be antitheses in so far as any creatural mind is concerned, and compatible only within the Divine Substance. Science as it gradually results from the work of numberless generations, is neither perfectly certain nor perfectly independent. The one or the other facet may be stressed in various epochs, but in none has knowledge ever been atomized into individual consciousnesses, and it has also, therefore, never been, and will never, so long as history lasts, be both completely free and completely certain. For knowledge is an achievement of civilization, that is, a result of collective work, and the individual participates in it by absorbing the knowledge accumulated by the labour of preceding and contemporary generations and at best by adding to it his own modest share.

In the political field, the consequence of a refusal to accept authority would be similar and would lead directly into anarchy. We have but to translate certainty by security, and independence from authority by liberty in order to realize the analogy. If security is understood in the only legitimate meaning it may have in this field, namely as the guarantee of justice, the elimination of all authority turns out to be impossible. It appears then that only the agent exercising authority has to be constituted in a certain manner in order to combine justice with freedom. Political emancipation has, in fact, not consisted in the abolition of all authority, but in its transfer from privileged persons exempt from the law to the Law itself. The Cartesian postulate that none should accept as true anything to which he did not freely consent, was carried out in the political field by the institutions of representative government and equality before the law. Thus, the principle of freedom was efficiently combined with the necessity of a supra-individual pattern of justice, which, within the sphere of the body politic, is the condition of liberty.

The philosophic doctrine of Leibniz laid a solid foundation for the inevitable compromises between liberty and security, and between autonomy and certainty. By rejecting the subjective criteria of truth proposed by Descartes and replacing them with objective and formal criteria, he at the same time renounced the absolute emancipation from authority; but he also replaced the authority of a person with that of a formal method. And, disproving the dependence of justice upon power, he substituted the authority of objective and formal principles of justice for the authority of rulers. In both respects, the generative principles were conceived of as having their mainspring and archetype in the ideas and laws according to which God Himself, according to His own perfections, was bound to create and is bound to rule the universe. By abandoning the conception of God as a despotic legislator and introducing

that of a constitutional governor of the world, Leibniz was able to account for the processes of history without having to refer to unfathomable decrees, and to understand their aim as a harmonious combination of freedom and justice in a world-wide human community.

If the dénouement Leibniz proposed to the paradoxical antithesis of liberty and security were better known and understood, and if there were any chance of the world at large heeding the advice of an interpreter of reason and justice, our present epoch might take advantage of the ideas Leibniz evolved to overcome the conflict between these two primordial desires of human nature. For it may truly be asserted that this conflict not only shakes the foundations of certain epochs, but in ever-changing forms is inherent in the structure of civilization itself. Whether it appears in the form of an antagonism between the certainty of knowledge and its independence, of a dilemma between a secure road to salvation controlled by authority and the free choice of such a road, of an alternative between political security and liberty, or—and this is its present-day reincarnation—as a conflict between freedom of enterprise and economic security; all these antitheses are only various embodiments of one and the same intrinsic imperfection of any historic civilization and the ineluctable effects of the limitations of human nature. But in whatever form the tension may manifest itself, it can obviously be allayed only by one of two means: by brute force used in the service of one of the primordial human desires to suppress the other, or—Leibniz's solution—by submitting any conflict to arbitration by the twin principles of reason and justice.

ON THE IDEA OF IMPORTANCE

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THE idea of Importance has received scanty treatment in philosophical literature, yet it is always turning up. Whitehead has, indeed, spoken of "the sense of importance" as "nerving all civilized effort";[1] and elsewhere he names "importance" and "matter of fact" as "two ultimate notions."[2] But the passage where he considers these is all too short and elusive, and I know of no other direct discussion of the meaning of importance. Plenty of attention has, of course, been paid to the notion of *interest*. But "interest" does not cover the whole notion of importance; it covers at most that aspect which I shall call "relational importance." "Importance" I shall suggest is a bridge notion, used to refer both to what matters in relation to some interest, and to what, as we say, "really matters." It might therefore be worth considering its merits as a candidate for the position of generic term for value, since it can be subdivided so as to express both its relational and its absolutist aspects.

The absolutist aspect may, of course, be questioned. "Importance," it might be said, is simply an evaluation or emphasis which we put on something in relation to our desires and purposes; something, in fact, which we "import." (This is not just a bad pun. The Oxford English Dictionary gives a transition of meaning of "to import," from *importare*, "to carry in" or "to convey," to "to convey meaning," and then "to signify or be important.")

Certainly what is important is often so as means to end in the context of some purpose or interest. If I want to catch my bus, it is important that I should leave the house now. If I want to learn a new subject, certain preliminary stages, though dull, are important because the possibility of understanding what comes later hangs on their mastery. Given the end, whatever is a necessary means is in that context important.

But what about the importance of ends? At certain times we may find ourselves full of a sense of the importance of achieving some success, of the importance of keeping someone's good opinion, or even of the Importance of being Earnest. At other times, if we are in a sceptical mood we may feel that all these are vanity; or if we are in a religious mood, that they are small matters in the eyes of God. Yet the conviction may reassert itself or persist that some at

[1] *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 125.
[2] *Modes of Thought*, chap. i.

least of our judgments as to what is important may refer to things which are "really important."

So we return to the relative importance of ends. There have been attempts to grade activities according to a scale; one thinks of Aristotle's description of the Chief End for man, and his setting of the theoretic above the practical life. And there have been challenges to such scales. There have been demands for a hierarchy of values, and attempts to supply one. Yet it is not evident that in all contexts our values remain in the grade we may in general have assigned to them. Are we to say that truth is always more important than love of our neighbour, or love of our neighbour than truth, or beauty than morality, or morality than beauty? We saw such a conflict in priorities arise during the Fifth Army campaign in Italy last year. Should ancient monuments and works of art be saved at the cost of human life? Considerations of humanity and strategy had to be weighed against the value put on the aesthetic achievements of civilization; and there was no self-evident answer which commanded general assent. There are situations in which we must choose between high values; and, though we may have a general scale of precedence, it is not certain that it will be applicable in all contexts. If it were, this would mean that we judged that a certain value, e.g. human life, was in all circumstances *more important* than anything else. But it seems more likely that there is no such absolute rule, and that we have to judge which value is the most important, in comparison with others, in the context of a particular decision.

Perhaps some expert on the philosophy of values will tell us how this judgment of "importance" compares with the notion of *Vorziehen* "valuational preference," which Nicolai Hartmann adopts from Scheler, and which is said to determine the "height" of a given value.[1] In one of its aspects, the judgment of "importance" is also allied to the judgment of what is "fitting," in so far as it is concerned with the proper discrimination of what we ought to choose at any given time. A sense of proportion, as distinguished from fussiness, we understand to include a right sense of what is important and what is unimportant *in its own proper season.* But whereas "fitting" refers mainly to the appropriateness of value to circumstance (there is a time for everything, a time to weep and a time to laugh . . .), "important" carries the additional suggestion that the value is not only appropriate to the situation, but also that in some sense it is worth achieving. Hence it might be suggested that the judgment of importance could be described as the most fundamental of value judgments, since it determines what specific value we should seek to realize in any instance.

Whitehead has indicated something like this in the all too brief

[1] *Ethics* II, iii (c).

passage to which I have referred.[1] "Importance," he says, is a generic notion of which morality, logic, religion, art are subordinate species. And he goes on to say that "the generic aim of process is the attainment of importance in that species and to that extent which in that instance is possible." "The destruction of a man, or of an insect, or of a tree, or of the Parthenon, may be moral or immoral. . . . Whether we destroy, or whether we preserve, our action is moral if we have thereby safeguarded the importance of experience so far as it depends on that concrete instance of the world's history."[2]

Here "the importance of experience" is stated to be an ultimate consideration. And "morality" we are told "consists in the control of process so as to maximize importance."[3] But can it be "importance" itself which is important? Whitehead may mean that, while it is important that each instance should express that value which is appropriate to it, there is no one specific value which is appropriate to all instances. Hence "importance" names the genus, but not a specific value. We notice "morality" is here described as concern for what is important, whereas in the former passage[4] it appeared as one of the *species* of the generic notion of importance. How can one of the species of the genus also be the concern for the genus itself? He is obviously using "morality" in two senses. In the narrower specific sense, morality is equated presumably with the concern for codes and types of behaviour. In the wider sense, in which a moral judgment is the concern for what is important, it would be, as Nicolai Hartmann would say, "on the back of the other values."

So too might be "importance." What is judged to be important would be not "importance" itself, but one value rather than others in the instance under consideration. Hence, "importance" would consist in the value of right discrimination between other values. But I do not believe that all Whitehead means by "importance" is the right discrimination between values in any given situation. I believe that he does mean by "the importance of experience" that importance itself is an intrinsic value. This sounds as though the generic notion were being treated as if it were specific. But I think we should take him to mean that every value is a way of achieving some definiteness of individual character, and that this itself produces a value we can call "importance." What this might mean may become clearer if we consider the opposite notion, triviality. What is trivial is thin, frivolous and weak after its kind. *It does not really matter.* What is important, on the other hand, has achieved some measure of distinction of quality and definiteness of aim. When this is of a high degree, it is called *greatness.* It need not be distinction

[1] *Modes of Thought*, p. 16.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

in moral goodness. It is the distinction of anything after its kind, and this may be an evil kind. So Whitehead writes of the value of teaching school children about the ancient Romans,[1] "Their aims were great, their virtues were great, and their vices were great. They had the saving merit of sinning with cart-ropes. Moral education is impossible apart from the habitual vision of greatness."

The sense of triviality can be more devastating than the experience of evil. For evil is at least something sufficiently definite and positive to awaken us, and perhaps to shock us into awareness of the character of its opposite. But the sheer sense of triviality may be the most paralysing form of scepticism. Hence it is often allied with the sense of unreality. If nothing really matters, then perhaps nothing is real, or at any rate, as Lord Balfour would have said, "really real."

> "Unreal City,
> Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
> A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
> I had not thought death had undone so many,"

Eliot writes in *The Waste Land*, that epitome of the sense of triviality. We catch an echo from the *Inferno*,

> *che morte tanta n'avesse disfatta*

and we remember that this is spoken of the crowd of "those dreary souls who lived without blame and without praise," whom neither Heaven nor Hell wants, neither God nor His enemies, "for the wicked would have some glory over them." Their triviality is punished by pricks and stings, an everlasting succession of petty punishments.

The trivial is too lacking in form and content for our minds to bite on it. Hence we tend to say that it is unreal. On the other hand, when we judge that something is important, at least we think of it as sufficiently definite and distinguished for us to take note of it. We are aware of it as something that matters and makes a difference, and so we think of it as "real." On the other hand "that which makes no difference" can be thought of as the vanishing point both of importance and of reality. But though "importance" and "reality" are thus connected in our minds, they cannot be synonymous. The real is what it is; it may be important or interesting to a high degree, but it is not real because it is important or interesting. Fantasies and forgeries, such as *Mein Kampf* or the Donation of Constantine, may be important and interesting, and certainly make a difference on a wide scale. But they are only real in the sense that

[1] *Aims of Education*, p. 106. (New York, 1929.)

it is the case that someone has produced them and others have believed them; their contents are imaginary and untrue notions.

Perhaps the tendency to define "real" in terms of "important" arises in some such way as this: If we are asked to say what we mean by real, we are driven either to giving a formal definition (e.g. that the real is that with reference to which true categorical assertions are true), or else we seek to *characterize* it in terms of some property or relation we judge to be important. Then it is possible to slip over into making this judgment into a *criterion* of what it means to be real. This, I believe, happens in those philosophies which look for the "key to reality" in "values." Lotze, for instance, writes, "I feel sure of being on the right track when I seek in what should be the ground of what is."[1] And Bosanquet writes in a famous passage "In morality we know that the good purpose is real; in religion we believe that nothing else is real." This purports, it is true, to be a statement of religious and not of metaphysical belief. I find it equally shocking in either connection. What religious believer would maintain that the reality of God was exhausted by His "good purpose?" Metaphysically, I should say that the fault in this way of speaking lies, not in taking some selected type of experience which is judged important (in this case moral experience), and using it to give insight into certain characteristics of real things (this is probably inevitable if we are to have metaphysics at all), but in making this into a *criterion* for what can be real. Our *conception* of "reality" may indeed be drawn in terms of certain characteristics which we have been able to take note of, and have judged to be in some way important. But this should be corrected by a very present sense of the selective character of such interpretations. An adequate definition can, of course, be a criterion, i.e. a token by which we decide whether anything is a such and such. But a characterization of "reality" in terms of certain properties of certain real things is unlikely to be an adequate definition. It may only be a selective description drawn from such aspects of some real things as we have found impressive, and can therefore only be extended with caution as a description of what it means to be real.

It must be owned, however, that some metaphysicians, especially those who "find the key to reality in value," give some warrant for the suspicion that when they say "real" they are in fact meaning "important." So Mr. Ducasse can state boldly in a recent book:[2] "The adjectives 'real' and 'unreal,' as they enter into the statement

[1] Quoted by Laird, *The Idea of Value*, p. xviii, from Lotze, *System of Philosophy*, English translation, Vol. II, p. 319. In the edition I have consulted (Oxford, 1884), the reference is Vol. II, p. 536.

[2] *Philosophy as a Science* (New York, 1941) p. 148. I owe this reference to Prof. Laird. Cf. his article in *Mind* N.S. Vol. LI, No. 203, p. 251.

of a metaphysical position, do not designate any character that any things have independently of human interest in them, but are on the contrary adjectives of human appraisal. The adjective real voices appraisal of something as being of a species which is of interest at the time to the person applying the adjective; and the adjective unreal, on the contrary, voices appraisal of something as belonging to a species of no interest to him at the time and therefore as to be ignored by him. This implies that a general statement of the form 'to be real is to be such and such,' does not formulate a hypothesis and is therefore not susceptible of being proved, disproved, or assigned a probability. Rather, it formulates simply the criterion of interestingness which we use or propose to use at a given time in appraising any given thing as interesting or uninteresting to us."

Mr. Ducasse does not launch out on a metaphysical theory constructed in terms of what he finds interesting. He would probably eschew the attempt, and say that he is merely discovering the fact that when metaphysicians say "real" they mean "interesting."[1] This tendency may be connected with Lord Balfour's distinction (which is psychological rather than logical) between what we think is real and what we think is really real.[2] The latter holds our volitional and emotional, as well as what Newman called our notional assent. Hence we can appropriate it intellectually and emotionally; it "makes a mark" for us, and so becomes "significant." (A German might speak in this regard of *das Gefuhl für das Bedeutende.*)

Let us, however, return to the idea of importance, and look at it without this metaphysical aroma. It is sometimes suggested that when we say something is important, we mean that we are feeling strongly about it, or that it is preoccupying us when we make the judgment. This clearly won't do. It needs no false modesty for me to be able to say with assurance that the issue of the Russian offensive towards Berlin in progress as I write is more important than my success or failure in writing this paper. I am quite certain of this, although at the moment I am entirely preoccupied with the paper. Hence we can detach our judgment of relative importance from what happens to be absorbing our intellectual and emotional attention at any time. So too we can distinguish what we judge important from what is merely urgent. To read some really good philosophy

[1] I find this hard, by the way, to reconcile with what he says later in the book, on p. 234, concerning the need that any definition of "real" should explain our "spontaneous appraisals" of what is real, and he instances "What definition of real would explain our spontaneous assertion that Spain is a real country but Utopia is not?" On the former count, should we not have to say that to a metaphysician Utopia is real when he finds it interesting?

[2] We should probably many of us have to own, if we were pressed, to detecting a similar distinction, psychological but not logical, between "Is your journey necessary?" and "Is your journey *really* necessary?"

book might be a more important occupation than to do the washing up; but we know how all too often the latter is the more urgent. The urgent is, of course, important at least in the sense that it calls for our immediate attention. But it may only be important because it is a means to an end. We do it because otherwise we should not be able to do other things which we think are more important in themselves, or perhaps we should not be able to live at all. For, as Aristotle pointed out, we must cope with "life" before we can aspire to the "good life"; and others, above all Hartmann, have shown how these lower values are the necessary basis for the "high" values.

"Importance" is therefore a bridge notion. It may be used to refer to what is necessary as means to end in the context of some purpose or concern. This could be called hypothetical or relational importance. But there is also the categorical sense of importance, by which we maintain that some things not only matter in relation to our purposes and concerns, but that they "really matter." By what tokens can these be recognized?

We should perhaps allow that whatever "makes a difference" has thereby some degree of importance. This need not mean that it is necessary to be aware of the difference; one thing can make a difference, and so be important, to another without its being aware of it. (This kind of importance would be the non-indifference which Prof. Laird calls "natural election.") But the difference may be slight and the things which are not indifferent to one another may be trivial. Or, though the difference one makes to another may be considerable (as with a Pekinese and an empty headed mistress), yet, because of their own triviality, little lasting difference is made to anything else. When we speak of some thing or some event as important, we generally mean not only that it matters to something else somewhere, but that it makes a difference for good or ill to a wide range of other things. But what we judge most important need not necessarily be that which creates the greatest physical disturbance. Newton was born in 1642, the year Galileo died, when the Thirty Years' War was in progress. The latter caused widespread commotion and devastation; but we should not hesitate to say that the work of Newton and Galileo was more important in the life of humanity. For it was a definitive step in enlarging men's understanding of the world, and, as a secondary consequence, it brought radical changes in their way of life through the advances in physical science which it made possible.

This would establish the work of Galileo and Newton as an important event. When we consider the importance of one *idea* in relation to other ideas, our first criterion will still hold. An important theory makes a difference; and the extent of its importance may be partly gauged by how far it causes people to revise their former theories

or understanding of the subject concerned. Other ideas have to be re-orientated with reference to this as a key idea. Copernicus' hypothesis of the motion of the earth is important in this sense; so is the discovery of the constant velocity of light.[1]

An idea may also be important because it provides the final link in a chain. This might mean that it mattered only because it supplied a link hitherto missing. But it might also mean that it was the link which (to change the metaphor) clinched the matter under discussion. Hence, when importance is used in an absolute sense, it means not only that something makes a difference, but that it makes a difference in a decisive manner. This may become clearer if we consider how we should distinguish between the relevance and the weight of evidence. Relevance in the sphere of argument is, as Prof. Laird has said, a form of "natural election," the non-indifference of one thing to another. In material implication it may be taken, as the lawyer takes it, to mean such facts as are part of, or as can be shown to lead up to the fact at issue. I question whether in one sense it is proper to speak of degrees of relevance. If a consideration is relevant to the point at issue, it is relevant; and if not, not. But all that is relevant may not bear equally strongly on the point at issue, i.e. be of equal cogency. "Weight" means the degree of importance attached to some relevant considerations rather than others. This is not merely a matter of subjective preference, if it can be shown that, whereas other relevant considerations may be susceptible of alternative explanations, if *these* considerations be taken into account one conclusion only is possible or overwhelmingly probable. So it may be shown that, given these "weighty" pieces of evidence, the other evidence can be explained with reference to them, but that they themselves cannot be explained in any other way with reference

[1] G. H. Hardy in *A Mathematician's Apology* has an interesting discussion of why we should say some mathematical theorems are "serious" whereas chess problems are "trivial." (He prefers the word "serious" to "important" because of the ambiguity of the latter. Perhaps he is wise.) He suggests that our criterion of the "seriousness" of a mathematical theorem lies in the significance of the mathematical ideas which it connects. "We may say, roughly, that a mathematical idea is significant if it can be connected, in a natural and illuminating way, with a large complex of other mathematical ideas. Thus a serious mathematical theorem, a theorem which connects significant ideas, is likely to lead to important advances in mathematics itself, and even in other sciences" (p. 29). Chess problems, on the other hand, though intricate and ingenious, have no linkages beyond themselves. Another criterion of seriousness is that of "depth," an elusive notion to define, but which has something to do with the way in which the idea reaches to a more complex level of thought. Thus, the idea of an irrational is "deeper" than that of an integer (p. 50).

My attention was called to this passage by my friend Miss R. M. Wrong after this paper had been written.

to the rest of the relevant evidence. Hence special cogency is to be attached to these in seeking to prove the point at issue, since the explanation of the rest of the evidence can be shown to hang on them.

Thus "importance," though not the same as relevance, is closely connected with it. If nothing hangs on a statement or follows from it in establishing other statements, we should hardly judge it to be important, however impressive it may sound in itself. Mr. F's aunt in *Little Dorrit* used to make "inexorable and awful statements," such as "There's milestones on the Dover Road," or "When we lived at Henley, Barnes's gander was stole by tinkers." Our reaction to such utterances, in company less polite than hers, would be "So what?" A completely irrelevant statement is "immaterial"; it does not bear on the determination of any point at issue. On the other hand, all that is relevant is not equally material to determining the point at issue ("material" here meaning "importance" in the sense of cogency).

The gradation of relevance not in terms of itself, but in terms of weight or importance, implies an appeal to a selective judgment. I have just indicated how this might be justified, though it is obvious that such judgments will always be open to challenge. Much writing of history, for instance, contains challenges to former judgments of what is important, and thereby to the ways in which periods or groups of events have been interpreted. It is obvious that no history can be a mere dead level catalogue of matter of fact. There are innumerable facts, so that an exhaustive catalogue would be impossible to compile, and even if it were compiled it would be unreadable. Some selection must be made, and if made must be justified, either in terms of interest, i.e. by showing that the establishment of this particular fact solves or is an element in the solution of some problem which has arisen; or in terms of importance, i.e. by showing that, by concentrating attention on these facts, other facts can be seen to be explicable with reference to them.

A sense of importance sustains interest and brings a mere multiplicity into perspective. In expounding a theme, unless we can indicate what is essential and what is subordinate, we soon find ourselves lost in a maze of detail. What is "essential" or "important" may, of course, vary in different frames of reference, according to what particular questions we may be asking. We have most of us had the experience of re-reading some book of philosophy after a period of years, and finding "importance" in parts of the discussion which had missed us before. This is because in the meantime we had come to see the force of the questions with which those parts were concerned. Sometimes also new aspects of a book come out as "important" in relation to the particular audience we are addressing. For

example, I have lectured on Plato's *Republic* over a period of years to university students of various kinds, and in W.E.A. classes and unemployed clubs. I have never found I could treat it in just the same way; there has always been a difference of emphasis, since different facets of the book have lighted up through being related to the interests and experience of different groups of people. There is, of course, a place in university work for sheer exegesis (i.e. times when that is what is most *important*); but in adult education, when the audience is interested not in textual criticism but in continuing the discussion, some selection and underlining of "essentials" is inevitable. The fact that a slightly different selection or a different shift of emphasis proves appropriate in relation to a different group of people does not necessarily mean that the book is being treated "subjectively." It proves the richness of the actual content of the *Republic* that it can prove "important" in different ways in relation to different kinds of experience. Its power of standing up to such use strengthens our total judgment that the *Republic* is an "important" book.

But this judgment, I submit, also rests upon our impression of the quality of the book itself as a whole. And this brings me to the last, perhaps the most "important" of the criteria by which we seek to judge "real importance." Is it a philosopher's prejudice to say that, for mankind at least, among the things which "really matter" are not only those which make a difference, but those which make a difference in the particular sense of being in some way productive of spiritual reality? By this I mean whatever adds to the sum of achieved excellence, whether in human character, or in the products of man's imaginative life, as in art or literature; or whatever contributes to man's understanding of himself and the world; or whatever either directly or indirectly shapes the form of his life in relation to others in society. In all these, "importance" has, of course, a reference to the specific excellences open to human beings; and who is to say that there is nothing important and no excellences in the universe beyond these? I give such instances not as an attempt at an exhaustive catalogue of what is important, but as examples in which we can say that "importance" does not merely signify relevance to an end or interest but signifies some measure of achievement. For here its proper contrast is not the irrelevant, but the trivial.

In this sense, then, we may claim that some at least of our judgments as to what is important refer to things which are "really important." We may also recognize that we have a responsibility to further or protect these things, and that it is therefore a matter of importance for us to do so insofar as this may lie within our power. There are no more intolerable people to live with than the

doormats who refuse to admit that anything they could be or do could be of the slightest importance to themselves or anyone else. But a just recognition that, for instance, the shaping of ourselves and our work is of *some* importance does not mean that we think that nothing else is important. Nor does our recognition that some things are important mean that "we seek in what should be the ground of what is." If there be meaning in speaking of one Existent as "ultimately real," that Existent would indeed be of supreme importance. But it would be important because it was real, and not real because we judged it important. Of other real things, some may be greater and others less than those we judge important. Our value judgments can give us insight into the characteristics of certain real things; they cannot provide a *criterion* of reality. We may be important, but we are not as important as all that.

REPLY TO HISTORICISM[1]

F. H. HEINEMANN, Ph.D.

I

HISTORY has become a real and urgent problem. It harasses us in a double form, theoretical and practical, corresponding to the double meaning of the term "history" as either "a sequence of events in time" or "our knowledge of past events". The first concerns our attitude to human history. We somehow suffer from "historical indigestion". We may have mastered Nature, but we have certainly not yet mastered History. Therefore it threatens to dominate us. The mass of past events is too much for us and for our memory, too many dates, too many facts, too many interesting or indifferent happenings. We cannot even keep pace with, or realize, all the important events which fill our own times, like world-wars, revolutions, counter-revolutions, inflation and deflation, with all the misery they imply. Consciously or unconsciously we feel ashamed of the human record, of the amount of cruelty, destruction, murder, and martyrdom inflicted on innocent beings. In spite of all this we cannot escape History. All the great events affect every human being. Moreover, historical knowledge permeates our education and is disturbingly growing from year to year, more in detail and in specialization than as a co-ordinated whole. We may react to this situation in one of three ways: (1) by filling our brain with this unco-ordinated mass of historical knowledge, and submerging our personality in it, (2) by becoming specialists and disregarding problems other than our own, (3) by ignoring the past altogether, and falling back into the state of nature and barbarism. We have witnessed all these solutions and their disquieting results. The philosopher, in a similar manner, is faced with the choice, either to treat all problems historically, and lose thereby the faculty of original research; or to become a specialist by knowing more and more about less and less. A possible third course is to try, like Schopenhauer and the Neo-Positivists, to disregard History and to philosophize without it. All these solutions are highly unsatisfactory. A philosophical problem, *qua* philosophical, is not historical and, if treated as such, loses its vitality. A specialist may be a most useful member of human society, but a world-authority on the interpretation of *Republic* 508–511 cannot claim to be called a philosopher. On the other hand, we cannot forget History, even if

[1] Paper read to the Oxford University Socratic Club, February 25, 1946.

we try. The very language we are using is the heritage of past generations and every term we apply has its history. Practically our dilemma seems to be that we know too much of historical details, and not enough of essentials or of what is necessary for our happiness and the avoidance of the martyrdom of man.

The theoretical problem concerns our knowledge of history. We are uncertain about the character and evaluation of this subject, about its place in the totality of our knowledge and its relation to philosophy. Some say that it is no science at all, because it is not concerned with Universals, but is merely the narrative of certain events. Others maintain that it is the *only* science which really matters. "The proper study of mankind is man." Some suggest that it has nothing to do with philosophy, that even art is more philosophical (Aristotle, Schopenhauer); others that it is identical with philosophy (Hegel, Croce). Therefore we have to ask: What is History? Is it a science? What is the specific character of this knowledge? Is it philosophically relevant? What is the relation of philosophy to history? Are they completely independent of each other, or are they identical? If they are related, what is their real connexion?

I cannot attempt to analyse, much less solve all these problems. I shall therefore confine myself to the one problem of the relations between these two subjects. In doing so, I shall always keep in mind the specific formulation which this problem has received in the work of Wilhelm Dilthey who has just been introduced to the British public by Professor Hodges.[1] I shall, however, not start with an exposition of his *historicism*, but I shall apply the same historical method which he advocates, to his own work. This seems to be both fair and necessary. It will at once reveal the truth that the so-called *historicism* is only to be understood as the result of a specific historical development, and that it is characteristic of a specific period of human history.

II

Since the Intellectuals lost their belief in God they pinned their hopes on *Ersatz*-religions. *Deus sive Natura* became the dominant heresy of Renaissance and Enlightenment, *Deus sive Historia* that of the nineteenth century, and *Deus sive Scientia* begins to dominate the *élite* of the twentieth century. The identification of God and Nature by Giordano Bruno, Spinoza or Shaftesbury is well known. Dilthey planned a history of European pantheism, and made some important contributions to it. The contemporary deification of Science is not quite as evident. Sceptics may be referred to one of

[1] *Wilhelm Dilthey, An Introduction.* Kegan Paul, 1944.

the prophets of the new creed, who, in a most extraordinary paper, "Science is a stern God",[1] reveals what millions of people in the technological civilizations of America and Russia are thinking. They will discover to their amazement in Professor Harold H. Punke the Moses of the new religion, to whom are revealed the Twelve Commandments of this new god. These begin with (I) "I am thy God, which has brought thee out of squalor and misery, out of the bondage of ignorance," and end with (XII) "They that love me and keep my commandments shall have their heads crowned with degrees, their bosoms decked with keys, and their egos anointed with praise." Truly, science is not merely a stern, but a sensibly rewarding god! Is it too much to hope that this faith has been exploded with the atom-bomb? Leaving these two heresies aside I ask—How did it come about that History became a Goddess? It is not easy to give a short answer to this question, and I shall go no further into the matter than is indispensable for making plain three important facts. These are, first, that Historical Pantheism became the dominant heresy of the nineteenth century; second, that the equation *Deus sive Historia* is derived, directly or indirectly, from the equation *Deus sive Natura*; and third, that this Historical Pantheism forms the basis of contemporary Historicism.

History became a Goddess in the nineteenth century because this century developed the "human studies" and put them with the help of philological exegesis, historical criticism, comparative method and the study of evolution, on a really scientific basis.[2] The study of language, law, folklore, religion, myth, literature, society, and economics found only then an empirical and solid basis. The new historical consciousness was opposed to the natural system of the age of enlightenment, to natural religion, natural morality, the law of nature, etc. Consequently the value of Nature declined, and that of History rose. In this trend of thought the historical element in, and the historical character of, Christianity was stressed. Thus it came about that History became a Goddess when the pantheism of Nature gradually transformed itself into a pantheism of History. With this new religion human self-esteem reached a new height, and it is not surprising that even Marx and Darwin, though in an irreligious mood, paid homage to the new Goddess.

It is important to see that it is Historical Pantheism and not Evolutionary Pantheism (Dilthey) that characterizes the nineteenth century. Historical Pantheism became one of the chief elements of

[1] *The Journal of Philosophy*, vol. XLII, 1945, pp. 65 ff.

[2] Cp. for details Dilthey's most brilliant essay, "Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften," *WW*, VII, pp. 88 ff. I accept "human studies" as a translation of *Geisteswissenschaften*, cp. Hodges, *L.c.*, p. 157.

Schleiermacher's religiosity. Religion was to him the work of the Mind revealing itself in History. In opposition to the natural religion of the eighteenth century, he stressed the fact that religious persons, and with them religions, are thoroughly historical (*durchaus historisch*). If he spoke of the Universe and man's dependence on it, he added that infinite, undivided mankind forms the true Universe. He went even as far as to say that "History in its essential sense is the highest object of religion, it starts with it and it finishes with it—for wisdom is in its eyes also history and the two cannot be differentiated, and all true history has had everywhere first a religious aim, and has started with religious ideas."[1] This is History, not yet as a Goddess, but as the highest object of religious veneration.

Fichte makes an important contribution to the development of this standpoint. He transforms Spinozism, which he accepts as the basis of his theoretical philosophy,[2] into "pantheistic idealism" or "idealistic pantheism". He installs the Ego (*eines jeden Ich*) as the highest substance, and adopts at the same time a negative attitude to Nature, which he accepts merely as a stage for man's moral activity. He does not expressly substitute History for Nature, but he gives in fact a "pragmatic history of the human mind".[3] And he adds, correcting Kant: "We are not law-givers of the human mind, but its historiographers; not in the sense of journalists, but as pragmatic historians."[4] This "history" is *de facto*, however, far from being pragmatic; it is rather the description of a dialectic movement which is cyclical in its structure.

Schelling starts with advocating "Philosophy of Nature," but he interprets nature in the light of the "history of our mind" as "the history of the different stages through which the mind passes until it reaches the intuition of itself, the stage of pure self-consciousness."[5] This is the idealistic idea of History, accepted by Hegel, Croce, Gentile, and Collingwood.[6] More important, in his second period, Schelling accepts the philosophy of identity and the Absolute in the double form of Nature and History.[7] This is equivalent to the formula *Deus sive Natura et Historia*. But he adds that History represents a higher stage, because it expresses, in the form of the Ideal, what Nature gives merely in the form of the Real. He goes as far as to say, that "there is nothing, even among the most holy,

[1] *Über die Religion*, *WW*, IV, p. 270 (Leipzig, 1914). The identification of wisdom and history anticipates the identity of philosophy and history of philosophy (Hegel) and that of philosophy and history (Croce).

[2] *Werke*, ed. Medicus, Vol. I, p. 317.

[3] *L.c.*, p. 208.

[4] *L.c.*, p. 415.

[5] *Works*, I, 1, p. 382–83.

[6] R. G. Collingwood, *An Autobiography*, ch. X.

[7] *Works*, I, 5, 306.

which could be more holy than History, this great mirror of the World Spirit, this eternal poem of the Divine understanding, and nothing less suitable to be touched by impure hands."[1]

This development culminates in Hegel. There is agreement about his pantheism and about the fundamental role played by History in his thought. We need only combine these two elements, in order to see that he brought Historical Pantheism to its highest perfection, and by so doing laid the foundation for Historical Materialism and Historicism. His standpoint, often labelled panlogism or absolute idealism, is in fact pantheism; for it is based on the assumption that the Universe is one and that the Divine power is present at every moment and in every object. It is Historical Pantheism, because it assumes an evolution of the one Universe in Nature and Mind, and it interprets the evolution of Nature according to the model found in the evolution of the mind. It is an arresting spectacle to watch the absorption of religion, first Christianity and later all religions, by his pantheism. Christianity, based on the idea of the unity of God and man, reaches its perfection in man's return to God from whom he originated. Everything lives in God and every child has a hidden light within, which leads him back to God. Christianity, the history of the redemption of man, itself an historical religion, forms one stage in the religious development of mankind, one day to be replaced by a new religion, in which the unity of the mind finds a more perfect realization. At the same time Historical Pantheism becomes the basis of Hegel's system; i.e. of his phenomenology, which gives the history of the experience which the mind makes of itself on its way to truth; of his logic, which is the science of truth, as *das reine sich selbst entwickelnde Selbstbewusstsein*; of his philosophy of nature and of his philosophy of mind. There is no room to go into details. Noteworthy is the consequence that there is no element in our experience which is not essentially "historical", in the specific sense and with the specific variations, in which Hegel uses this term. If further History is, objectively, "the unfolding of the nature of God in a specific element", and, subjectively, the "description of the Divine absolute process of the mind", this implies a deification of History, which is even more fundamental than the deification of the state. But,[2] most important for us, Hegel reaches the stage of Historicism as a consequence of his Historical Pantheism. When he formulates his famous identity of Philosophy and History of Philosophy, *Encyclopedia*, § 13, he bases it on the supposition that the *one* living mind is the real author of all these labours throughout the centuries.

Marx transformed Hegel's Historical Pantheism into Historical

[1] *L.c.*, p. 309.

[2] Cp. *Philosophy*, 1945, pp. 81 ff.

Materialism, replacing God by matter in general, and by natural production and the economic activity of man in particular. But History still remained the supreme master, determining human destiny, and redeeming man. His ideas of history and of dialectical method differed fundamentally from those of Hegel,[1] but his standpoint was again historicism. He regarded every element of our consciousness as historically, i.e. economically, determined. Marx, it is true, views the change of human society as a natural process. He does not, however, fall into the error of assuming general abstract laws, like those of physics or chemistry, as valid for the whole process of history. He is even more historical than Hegel in his assumption that every period of human history has its own laws, and he studied indeed the specific structure, and the specific laws governing modern Capitalism.

I shall not enter into a discussion whether or not Darwin's Evolutionism is also based on a transformation of Historical Pantheism. His tendency to believe in *one* evolution (a presupposition which is not at all self-evident) and the fact, that evolution tends to assume the functions of God, might be adduced in support of this hypothesis. In any case Darwin upheld the belief in History. The same is true of Bergson's Creative Evolution, though his Godhead is Time as *Durée*. It is sufficient for my purpose if it has become evident that Historical Pantheism forms the basis of contemporary historicism, as it is represented by Dilthey,[2] Croce, and Collingwood.

III

Historicism, though prepared in the eighteenth century, is a specifically nineteenth-century phenomenon. We are not concerned here with its own history, but merely with its philosophical implications, and with its proposed solution of the relation of philosophy to history. We have, however, to ask first, "What is historicism?" Professor Hodges neither puts nor answers this question. He simply identifies historicism with Dilthey's historical relativism (p. 33) or with "historical psychological relativism".[3] In fact, this term remains usually either undefined or ill-defined. The term itself is a recent one, not encountered before 1879, and not yet included in the Oxford Dictionary. Its coining presupposed a stage in the development of the historical consciousness in which the "historical sense" has already penetrated the different departments of research, and in which people became aware of this fact. Nietzsche and Dilthey indicate this stage, which we could call the self-consciousness of his-

[1] E. Troeltsch, *Der Historismus u. seine Probleme*, 1922, pp. 333 ff.; 347, 490.
[2] Cp. F. Heinemann, *Neue Wege der Philosophie*, 1929, pp. 186, 190 ff.
[3] Dilthey, *Werke*, 8, 232.

toricism, the one negatively, the other positively. Nietzsche's famous essay, *Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben*, should be studied by every student of History. He detected the "historical sense", a sort of sixth sense of modern man; he diagnosed "historical illness" and "historical fever". His new point was to weigh the pros and cons of history in its influence on human life. "Only in so far as history serves life, do we want to serve it. But there is a kind of history, and a valuation of it, under which life shrinks and degenerates." His problems are indeed our problems. When Ernst Troeltsch published his important work, *Der Historismus und seine Probleme*, 1922, his somewhat vague definition of historicism followed Nietzsche and not Dilthey (p. 9). F. Meinecke in his book, *The Origin of Historicism*, sees its essence in the replacement of a generalizing description of historical forces by an individualizing description, and he adds that individual entities (whether persons or collectives) reveal themselves merely in evolution. But this individualistic or concrete character of history is almost universally recognized, and surely historicism is more than "evolutionary individualism". What then is it?

It may be, metaphysically, defined as that standpoint which regards "being in time" as the fundamental form of being, and all other forms of being as derived from it. Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* represents the ontology of historicism. This book is based on the assumption, that the being of man is being in time and that therefore every understanding of being presupposes the horizon of time.[1] In fact, Hegel had already expressed the prevalence of "being in time" in the more abstract form that being, in general, is a dialectical movement, and that every specific sort of being can only be understood as one stage or one moment in this movement. Hegel's followers, like Dilthey, Croce, Gentile, and Collingwood, give varying forms to this central idea.

The same idea may be expressed in this slightly altered definition, "Historicism is that standpoint which regards time as more fundamental than space." This follows from the prevalence of time (and of a very specific form of time at that) over space in history. Bergson brings this aspect of historicism to its clearest expression, though he is more interested in biology and psychology than in history. When he, in opposition to Descartes' identification of space and substance, accepts Time as the Absolute, this *temps qualité* or *durée* is in the last analysis historical time. Alternatively, Historicism may be defined as that standpoint which regards evolution, in any form, as prime characteristic of being. For "being in time" must be, in one sense or other, "being in evolution".

Materially Historicism regards man as *animal historicum*. This assumption is, however, somewhat ambiguous. It may mean that

[1] Cp. my above-quoted book, pp. 273, 374, 384 ff.

man is either the result of history (Hegel) or its producer (Marx) or both its product and producer. In any case, man cannot be understood, cut off from the flux of history. This is a thesis of great practical importance. It implies that our behaviour and experience are historically determined. Men act and re-act as they and their ancestors acted on similar occasions. The psycho-analytical schools have brought much material illustrating this historical character of our experience.

Correspondingly, the Universe is regarded from this standpoint as chiefly historical or as the result of evolution. Spencer brought out this feature, when he claimed that there are not several kinds of evolution going on in astronomy, geology, biology, psychology, sociology, etc , "but one Evolution going on everywhere after the same manner, an Evolution, which is one not in principle, but one in fact."[1] This very doubtful inference is based on generalizations from historical experience.

Epistemologically, historicism assumes that we cannot understand man's activities or his creations, like art, philosophy, religion, science, etc., except in their dependence on the flux of history. The process of human history is here accepted as the independent variable on which all the elements produced in it depend. There exists, e.g., no law of nature, independent of space and time: there are merely different historical, Greek, Roman, or English Laws, all of which are the result of specifically determined civilizations and which cannot be understood apart from them. In this interpretation the process of history plays the same role as economics, sociology, biology, or psychology play in other one-sided explanations of history. It has the advantage of being more general, and the disadvantage of being vaguer, than the others. This may lead to the further assumption that the human studies represent a specific kind of knowledge, different from that of nature (Dilthey, Windelband, Rickert). The reader will find a most lucid exposition of Dilthey's theory of historical knowledge in Professor Hodges' book.

Historicism has special relevance for the present world situation because it determines the concrete form under which the relation of philosophy and history appears in our time. For this reason the solutions proposed by the three chief contemporary representatives of this standpoint are of special interest. Collingwood's whole *œuvre* was devoted to a *rapprochement* between philosophy and history. He was perfectly right in drawing attention to the fact that history should not be neglected by philosophers and that the problems of historical knowledge should be considered in a theory of knowledge. But though he did not define this *rapprochement* in exact terms he clearly made philosophy dependent on history. He believed that it

[1] *First Principles*, p. 546.

was the chief business of twentieth-century philosophy to reckon with twentieth-century history, and that history should occupy in present-day thought the place which natural science occupied in the modern era. He even went so far as to assume that Metaphysics is an Historical Science, that cosmology is a super-history and that "Nature" depends on the form of thought represented by history. There is no room here to analyse these statements. They reveal the degree to which the spirit and method of historical research has penetrated philosophy, which has become unilaterally dependent on history. "For me," says Collingwood, "there were not two separate sets of questions to be asked, one historical and one philosophical, about a given passage in a given philosophical author. There was one set only, historical."[1] This is a variation of Croce's famous answer to our problem.

Croce identifies philosophy and history. "Philosophy is achieved *at every moment* and is always united to facts and conditioned by historical knowledge." "Philosophy and History are not two forms: they are not mutually conditioned, they are identical. . . . History does not precede philosophy, nor philosophy history, both are born at one birth."[2] They are distinguished merely for didactic purposes. As to the reasons for this identification, it must suffice to say, that, metaphysically, its basis is a philosophy of mind derived from Hegel. It is Hegel's Historical Pantheism all over again, but without its religious implications, and with specific stress on the *act* of the mind and its presence. History and philosophy are both constituted in one and the same act of the mind, namely the *a priori* synthesis, which is the reality of the individual judgment and of the definition. Thence follows the thesis that all history is contemporary history, and that it can never adequately depict the past, because it depends on present interests. This is the standpoint of historical relativism. It follows further, or rather it is assumed from the start, that philosophy is dependent on the historical situation out of which it arises. This implies that philosophy also has to accept the rule of historical relativism.[3] Historically, Croce's thesis is merely a generalization of Hegel's identification of philosophy and history of philosophy, and Croce himself gives us all the details of this metamorphosis. It would be unfair to say that Croce's identity is equivalent to a unilateral dependence of philosophy on history, but in fact it amounts to it. For philosophy becomes essentially a methodology of the historical sciences, and every philosophy is historically determined.

[1] *An Autobiography*, Penguin, p. 52.

[2] *Logic*, Engl. ed., p. 324.

[3] Cp. for Croce's relativism M. Mandelbaum, *The Problem of Historical Knowledge*, N.Y., 1938.

Dilthey's contributions to our problem are positive as well as negative. His secret is the enormous impressionability of his mind which is more the meeting-place of other great minds than the source of original ideas. He wanted to be the Kant, Schleiermacher, Humboldt, Hegel, and Mill of the historical world. Every one of them revealed to him new aspects of the relation of philosophy and history, expressed in these projects, (1) "Critique of Historical Reason" (Kant), (2) "Introduction to the Moral Sciences" (Mill), (3) "Hermeneutic" and return to "lived experience" or *Erlebnis* (Schleiermacher), (4) "Comparative study of religions and, later on, of philosophies" which leads to his typology and "Philosophy of philosophy" (Humboldt), and (5) history as *Seelsuche*, or the history of religion as the centre of human history (Hegel). He left most valuable fragments referring to these problems, which cannot be discussed here.[1] All of them indicate specific transformations of philosophy, or rather, the transformation of philosophy into specific sciences of the historical world. In our present situation it is much more important that Dilthey accepts historical relativism and that this acceptance leads not only to a unilateral dependence of philosophy on history, but to a complete absorption of philosophy by history. Dilthey offers the arresting example of a philosopher who looks, believes, and philosophizes backwards. The consequences, accepted by Professor Hodges, are that metaphysics is impossible; that it has to be replaced by a critical analysis of the conditions which gave rise to the illusion that metaphysics is possible or by a comparative study of outlooks; and that philosophy should be "psychology in motion towards a definite end" (p. 98). The urgent question is, Have we to accept these consequences as the necessary result of European philosophy?

IV

Our answer to this question must be an emphatic "No". Historicism, a descendant of Historical Pantheism, is itself historically determined. It belongs more to the end of the nineteenth than to the beginning of the twentieth century. It is a true expression of a *fin de siècle* mood, but it is completely inadequate to the age which we are entering. Its central thesis, that every element of our experience is historically determined, is true. But it is merely a half-truth or even less. The mistake is to accept a partial truth as absolute. Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, and others are perfectly justified when they say that our experience is economically, or sociologically, or biologically, or psychologically determined. All these correlations exist, but

[1] Cp. for his positive contribution my above-quoted work and Prof. Hodges' excellent book.

none of them in isolation. Just because they all exist in interdependence (man belonging simultaneously to all these spheres) they counterbalance each other and eliminate their damaging influence in the course of time. The central thesis is, moreover, ambiguous, because the term history itself is ambiguous. Pretending to point to concrete facts, it refers, indeed, to abstractions. For what we call history (whether we have world history, or the history of a state, or our own development in mind) is always an abstraction and a pretty arbitrary one at that. Our experience is connected with all these "histories", though these connexions are often very difficult to define. In order to make precise statements we have to choose the *one* of these interrelations which seems evident to us. On the other hand, all historical relativists tacitly presuppose *one* basic characteristic as common to all these histories, namely that of constant change and incessant novelty. This assumption, again, is only half-true. For *repetition* is always connected with change, a repetition of situations, actions, reactions, feelings, volitions, and thoughts. This fact alone makes history, as a science, possible. If this repetition is taken into account (and actually it occurs constantly in all spheres) the thesis of historicism looses much of its destructive and sceptical power. For it may be that just this repetition enables man to formulate propositions and to create works of art, etc., which are independent of the fortuitous circumstances of present conditions. Moreover, many of our activities and their results such as those of an artist, a scientist, a philosopher, transcend their own time. Surely the truth of a mathematical proposition is independent of the conditions in which it is formulated. In short, we are not obliged to accept the consequences of historicism and historical relativism, because they are based on an untenable premiss.

Thence it follows that we have to come to a new valuation of history. We have to master history if we do not want to be mastered by it. We have to dethrone the Goddess of history, enthroned by Historical Pantheism, Historical Materialism, and Historicism. We have to beware of the theses of historicism; that philosophy is identical with history; that metaphysics is an historical science; that metaphysics is impossible, and has to be replaced by a comparative study of outlooks; and that we are entering an age in which history will replace natural science. Neither is philosophy unilaterally dependent on history, nor are history and philosophy identical, but they are interdependent. This interdependence is, however, of a very specific kind. History needs philosophy for its interpretation; not only because philosophy was always an integral part of human civilization, but because the very interpretation of history implies philosophical questions. Is the apprehension of the unique and singular in history really an end in itself? Even if it were, we would

be quite incapable of understanding it, if there were merely uniqueness and singularity. We understand history only because there are certain elements which repeat themselves and which form the basis for what we call Universals. These Universals are of a specific kind in history. Are they types, and if so, what specific sort of types, and how are they connected with individuals and events? All these questions are philosophical, and cannot be avoided by an historian who tries to penetrate deeper into his subject. Even the philological art of interpretation, used by every historian, implies important philosophical questions.

But does a philosopher need history? Are not Aristotle and Schopenhauer right, who deny it? On this point, I think, they are wrong. For a true philosopher partakes in a discussion which goes on through the centuries. How could he, with advantage, participate in it, or add anything new, if he had not studied former investigations of his subjects, or if he could not give an account of the last three thousand years? Even, if he tried to forget the past, he could not escape it. The philosopher needs a knowledge of history and of the human studies, referring to man and his activities. Since the realm of man is nearer to him, he will be able to get a more personal and inside knowledge of it. Man will help him to understand Nature. Should, however, the philosopher decline material knowledge, even then history would remain important to him, as a specific form of knowledge, based on the knowledge of other persons and on the interpretation of their works. He would find that specific kinds of symbols are applied in history, and he could learn from the historical method of interpretation. The science of hermeneutics, developed in the study of history, has wider applications in philosophy.

Philosophy and history are interdependent, but this interdependence is of importance only for specific problems. Philosophy cannot be studied with advantage without a basis in at least one special science. The study of history, however, is in no way a substitute for the study of mathematics and physics, or even biology. The reason is that history is still in its pre-Copernican stage. It is very doubtful whether a philosophical student reading history would ever get to know what science really means or how to think. If Dilthey tries to persuade us that history gives us access to true reality, this again is very questionable. Even if we were to accept persons as "reality" or as part of it, do we get to know historical persons as they were or rather as they wanted to be seen? We should neither overrate nor underrate history. But, I am afraid, the sage was right, when he said, "Someone who is merely historical has not understood the lesson of life and will have to relearn it."[1]

[1] Note added during the revision. My attention has been drawn to the discussion of historicism in K. R. Popper's *Open Society and Its Enemies*,

1945. Everyone is entitled to use terms as he pleases. But Popper's use of the word historicism as denoting social philosophies which regard history as controlled by developmental laws enabling us to predict man's future seems rather arbitrary. Under its aegis Plato and Aristotle are written off as "historicists" in spite of the fact that they do not accept historical knowledge as true knowledge. Mr. Popper's remarks about essential definition are interesting and help us to understand Hegel's identification of philosophy with its history; but it is in no way necessary that this sort of definition, or rather a specific kind of it, namely genetic definition, should lead to historicism. Mr. Popper overlooks Proclus who forms a most important link between Plato–Aristotle and Hegel and who formulates most precise developmental laws without becoming an historicist in any sense of the word. The cyclical movement of his system has nothing to do with history. This use of the word historicism, which cannot account for the facts of history, should therefore not be accepted as genuine. The word should be used, with Professor Hodges, as a translation of the German *Historismus* which Mr. Popper translates by "historism," meaning by it "the method of treating philosophies or religions entirely from the point of view of their historical origin and environment"; this comes nearer to the true meaning of historicism.—As to the refutation of the epistemonological thesis of historicism which had to be as short as possible for lack of space, the following points which may be further developed should be kept in mind. (1) The dependence of *some* parts of our knowledge on either biological, psychological, social, economic, practical, or historical factors is not denied. The mistake of historicism and all these one-sided standpoints lies in faulty generalization. (2) Judgments which are completely dependent on any of these prelogical spheres are not strictly speaking knowledge, but pseudo-knowledge, because they are based on prelogical affirmation or negation (e.g. journalistic articles hiding the interests of a specific group behind pseudo-scientific language). (3) Moreover, the assumed relations of one-sided dependence are in fact relations of interdependence; the sphere of economics, for instance, depends as much on thought as thought on economics. (4) All these factors, biological, social, historical, etc., do not act in isolation but in interdependence and thereby counterbalance each other.

MEMORY AS ACCOMPANIMENT

E. M. ROWELL.

Our memories are private and particular; when you and I *share* an experience our experience is yet in the very moment of sharing different for you and for me, and our two memories of an event in the past are still more disparate. For memories are shaped and constrained by the deep-lying organic stress of what we have lived through, of our actual living, in the interval between then and now. A memory follows the solitary track of our individual experience, and, like the particle in modern Physical theory, is changed in and by the route it has traced.

We cannot remember other people's memories.

Do we then live in a self-contained world of our own? And are there myriads of such individual worlds? And how are these worlds accommodated in what we commonly call "the world?" Have we, or have we not, a "universe of discourse"? We cannot remember other people's memories, but we remember *other people*, and our memories are the reflexion in the glass of our own self-hood of *other* people's lives, of *other* things and places, of a whole concourse of events in space-time around us and about us, events which in entering our world yet retain their own intractable otherness.

Out of the vast potentiality of being which we posit, and which we are, I think, compelled to posit, we both take and make our world. And you and I draw from the same well of being, and what I *take* you too may take, but what I *make* is my own. We share a certain range of otherness; the matter of our memories may be common to you and to me; it is in their mode that they differ. *Le style, c'est l'homme.*

And memory is not only concerned with the past, it is also deeply implicated in the present. Memories of the past, memories in time as it were, have ingress into the present, modifying and moulding and deepening our experience of the here-now, but there is more than this. Besides this ingressive memory there is also memory which is congressive, which holds together as it were in a great meeting-place the whole concourse of the present. For not only are we at any moment *aware* of the circumambience of a contemporary world of persons and places and things, but we also *remember* this contemporary world. We live in an immediate here-now, but we could hardly keep our footing on this salient were it not for the surrounding extensiveness of the *there-now*. All the time as we move

and act and think and see, there in the background is the accompaniment of the massive simultaneity of all that is being moved and done and thought and seen around us, and, though our consciousness of this contemporary world is piece-meal and uncertain, it yet endows our fleeting moments with a certain amplitude and bestows a certain magnanimity upon our living.

And we *remember* this contemporary world. From time to time we remember explicitly this or that element in it, but *all the time* we have an implicit and, as it were, organic memory of what is happening in "the world" as we know it. Actual experience supports the claim of this memory of the present. "Remember Stalingrad!" Surely the tragic and shining memory of Stalingrad abides with us "in the deep heart's core" even when we are not explicitly thinking of it; surely for thousands of men and women in many far-flung lands and on the high seas there is a memory of Stalingrad *now*, memory which accompanies them as they pass to and fro on their lawful occasions, memory which changes, slightly it may be but surely, every one of those occasions.

And the very gaps which break such memory serve to further its claim. To the many lovers of France all over the world the fall of France meant not only shock and disillusion and grief; it meant more than this; it meant a blotting out of a gracious memory of the present. And ever since then our contemporary world is despoiled and diminished; all the time we are dimly aware that there is something we have lost, and we ourselves feel lost. The France we loved is no longer there to remember; there is a jagged rent in the outspread material of our memory of the *now*.[1]

Old memories remain, but something radiant, lovely and irreplaceable has fled from our remembering since France hid her head.

> The Rainbow comes and goes,
> And lovely is the Rose,
> The Moon doth with delight
> Look round her when the heavens are bare,
> Waters on a starry night
> Are beautiful and fair;
> The sunshine is a glorious birth;
> And yet I know, where'er I go,
> That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

Here we have constrained Wordsworth to our uses; in these lines he is of course speaking of a certain attrition of sense impression which often accompanies the passage of youth to maturity, the fading away of the glow of receptivity as the boy becomes man. But may it not be that such glow is the reflexion of our memory

[1] Written before the liberation of France.

of the present, and that as life advances this congressive memory gives place to the ingressive memory of age? But this is not now our question.

When we say we remember the contemporary world, it is still our own particular world that we remember. "The world" as we call it differs in dimensions, in content, in significance, in value, and in beauty for every one of us. There are worlds which include Europe, Asia, Africa and America and the seven seas—and quite a lot about each of these—and there are worlds which are not much more than the view from a small-front window in a narrow street. And these worlds vary according to our several talents, according to the measure of the gifts of environment, of education, and of natural endowment, that are ours. To one the name Saskatchewan focuses a range of information about a state in a great Dominion; for another it has personal association of travel or of friendship; for me it is just a word of alluring echo, absurd, thus perhaps, but nevertheless a note resounding in my accompaniment of memory!

Photographs of our different congressive worlds would give a series of very strange maps, some crowded with place-names and crammed with information, some delicately outlined but with blurred features, others so bare as to look almost empty at first sight. And all distorted relatively to each other and diminished in relation to what we call "the world."

Our worlds of the present are thus private and individual, they are what we "half create and half perceive"; the whole of Nepal may be missing from my map while you have an empty gap where I print in large letters the well-loved name SOUTHEASE. And *you* cannot travel in my world, and *I* should have much ado to move about in yours!

I once lodged with a little old woman in a tiny village on the Cornish coast. The little old woman could neither read nor write, she had never left her village and had never even seen a train. Her world was a miniature, mine a broad-hung canvas; mine so large, hers so small. But this is not all. One day I came in to the cottage after my bathe, and "Oh! the water was *cold*," I said. The old woman looked thoughtfully at me as I stood shivering there, and she said "So you been in that gra-at sea, that gra-at sea" and she shook her head. Immediately I felt rebuked. I with all my education remained bound to my own uses; to me the sea was cold to *my* body, the sea was "gra-at" to *her* spirit. Great and small are of course relative terms and great and small worlds may make interchange and be in truth small and great ones.

The old woman's memory of the present was almost bare of information, she did not even know that the "gra-at sea" on which she gazed was the Atlantic; her world was small but then it had no

irrelevances. My world was largely a world of hear-say, and my map was crowded with the names of places I had never seen.

Nevertheless this hear-say world may afford us precious memories of places and things. Who can doubt that Wordsworth had a lovely memory of Yarrow unvisited?

> Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown!
> It must or we shall rue it;
> We have a vision of our own;
> Ah! why should we undo it?

And when people say to me "What a pity that you never saw Italy," to myself I answer "Ah! but what matters is that Italy is *there,* and that I can thus remember Venice and Rome and Florence and Assisi." Something of the actual is missing from my memory, no doubt, and I miss that something. I feel about Italy and some other places as the poet did about Shelley.

> Ah! did you once see Shelley plain
> And did he stop and speak to you,
> And did you speak to him again?
> How strange it seems and true!

I have never stopped to speak to Venice or Assisi; nevertheless in some manner they abide with me, and, as with Wordsworth and Yarrow, such abiding memory may have a lovelier quality than that of actual experience.

We have a sense of the same kind of abiding memory in the ingressive remembrance of the past. Think for a moment of the death of Socrates: for some the name of Socrates is unknown, for others it has vague associations—a Greek, let us say, who asked questions. "Socrates asks why?,"—for others yet again the name focusses a vast field of research on Greek philosophy and social and political science; for a few perhaps the death of Socrates is a scene which they remember as if they had been in attendance there on that day, and as they at this distance of time rehearse the last words of the master it is as if they listened, and listening heard him speak.

There is of course a mere factual memory; we remember *that* a thing happened in such and such a way, at such and such a time, and this is usually what is implied when we say that a person has a good memory. But the remembering of an event and the remembering that it happened are very different matters. Think of the world of difference in significance between "I remember that she laughed" and "I remember her laugh." The first is a bit of information now passed on from me to you, suppose; the second is a bit of myself, secret and incommunicable. But sometimes factual memory may, as we have seen, be so informed with beauty that it

takes on the brooding shape of such incommunicable personal memory.

Thus both congressive and ingressive memory are fraught with the known and the unknown, and these elements interpenetrate each other in the massive sense of memory which is ours. It is true and it remains true that I cannot remember your memories. But I remember you and when I remember you it is *you* that I remember and not my memory of you, you in one aspect of your many sided self, but nevertheless *you* and not merely you in relation to me. The *content* of memory breaks through the modal isolation of this world of my remembering. Our memories of the past are woven of events in the lives of others—in the first place, the lives of our friends, then of those whom we have met and known, and lastly, and at one remove as it were, of all the actors of the past, poets and painters, soldiers and sailors, kings and potentates, prophets and saints, men whom not having seen we yet have known and yet know, and who from all down the ages are here and now the neighbours and gossips of our spirits. For many years for me, for instance, Chehov has been a real friend; his letters give me the sense of intimacy that I have with the friends I have known, and he remains one of those companions in my life who will I am sure go with me all the way.

The fact of otherness, and the recognition of such otherness does not hinder intimacy; indeed an awareness of the otherness of a friend's world is perhaps a necessary basis for friendship. The bore is a bore because he does not see that our world is different from his; he trundles his world to and fro past us under the impression that the vast hoop of his own information or exploit is itself *the world*, and we turn aside from him into the separation of our own preoccupation.

But if and as I am aware that a man's world is different from mine, then and in that measure I become aware of *himself*, he is no longer a mere part of my own world, he ceases to be an accompaniment and becomes a companion, one who accompanies me, a person in the right of his own inalienable world, a friend aware of my world and sharing with me my awareness of his.

For our separate worlds of memory are not mechanical wholes passing untouching and untouched along the line of time; rather are they vehicles of the spirit of man, mansions in which dwell persons who yet are not confined to these mansions. Thus though I may not cross the threshold of your place of memory, yet I still may be with you, and there are ways and ways of meeting. For the self transcends its memories.

NEW BOOKS

The Foundations of Phenomenology. By MARVIN FARBER. (Harvard University Press, 1943. Pp. 573. London: Humphrey Milford. English price, 33s. 6d.)

The major trends of philosophy of the past hundred years in both the English and the German speaking worlds have derived directly or indirectly from recoil against the British school of thought which began with Locke and culminated in John Stuart Mill. Subsequent theories of knowledge, perception, deduction, induction, probability, mathematics and semantics (not to speak of ethics, politics and political economy) can nearly all be traced back to revolts against the conclusions and the premisses of this school. In particular Mill's *System of Logic* (1843) stimulated (chiefly as an emetic) a galaxy of original thinkers into reconsideration of the principles of logic, epistemology and psychology.

The importation into England of the philosophies of Kant, Hegel, Lotze and Herbart had for its main motive not love of the Teutonic but nausea for Associationism. Jevons, Pearson and Venn were similarly moved to relay the foundations of the theory of scientific method. They with Caird, Green, Bradley, Cook Wilson, Grote, Sidgwick, Moore and Russell, were disunitedly united in the task of refuting dogmas of the Church of Hume.

In Germany and Austria there were parallel revolts. In Germany Frege's logical and epistemological theories were Platonic repudiations of the English psychological idealism, as this was mediated by Erdmann. In Austria Franz Brentano trained his whole school of philosophical psychologists upon the critical study of Locke, Berkeley, Hume, the Mills, Bain and Spencer.

Through his pupil Meinong (whose ultra-Platonism he repudiated) Brentano exercised, at the end of the 19th century, a certain cross-influence on English thought, particularly that of the early Russell. He also exercised a powerful influence upon German thought through another pupil, Edmund Husserl, though him too he disinherited both for his ultra-Platonisms and for other later offences. It is with Husserl that we are here primarily concerned.

Brentano made two radical amendments to the "Denkpsychologie" of the British Empiricists. (1) Accepting, unfortunately, the dogma that the ultimate elements of thought are "ideas," and that sense-data, images and concepts can all be classified as species of ideas, Brentano set up two other radically different modes of consciousness, namely judgment and feeling. These are founded in ideas, but are irreducible to ideas or amalgamations of ideas. This generic differentiation of feelings and judgments from ideas facilitated Brentano's rejection of the whole subject-predicate analysis of propositions, and he did in fact hold (*a*) that simple existence-propositions embody only one idea or term; (*b*) that most of the propositions hitherto construed as the ascriptions of predicates to subjects should instead be construed as linguistically veiled conjunctions of existence-propositions with attributive propositions; (*c*) that so-called universal affirmatives are really negative existence-propositions. On several scores, therefore, Brentano found that the grammatical structure of sentences is not an index to the logical structure of the propositions expressed by them. Epistemology and logic needed to discard the leading-strings of ordinary syntax. Both Meinong and Husserl were insufficiently influenced by this part of their master's teaching. (2) More im-

portant in his own eyes and in those of his pupils was Brentano's second amendment, namely his doctrine of "intentionality." All acts of consciousness, the having of ideas, judging and feeling are intentional (or as we might say "transitive"). Each is necessarily the sensing, imaging, conceiving, judging and liking (or disliking) *of something*. The objects (or "accusatives") of acts of consciousness were not supposed by Brentano to be independent reals, but rather "internal accusatives," the description of which was still the task of philosophical or descriptive psychology. Brentano was not, at this stage at least, any sort of a Realist. None the less the properties of, say, the number 7 are quite other than those of the acts of conceiving it, just as the properties of propositions are quite other than those of the acts of judging them. In particular, numerically and qualitatively different acts on the part of the same thinker or of different thinkers can "intend" one and the same concept or proposition. The contemporary British mishandlings of the special problem of "abstract ideas" were due to their proper refusal to ascribe to mental acts the properties which they improperly failed to accept as characters of the intentional objects of those acts, since they failed to acknowledge the presence of these intentional objects.

Meinong took the Realist plunge of converting the internal accusatives of conception, judgment and feeling into Objects. Criticising the abstraction-theories of Locke, Berkeley and Hume on what he took to be Brentano's principles, he hypostatised all the *entia rationis* of which Plato had ever dreamed, as well as many which could never have occurred to him. Not only abstract nouns, but general nouns, all substantival verbal expressions, including descriptive phrases, sentences, optatives and the rest, were construed as being genuine proper names of higher-order entities. For all alike could be embodied in significant sentences as subjects of predication. There must *be* objects named by them, else we could not say true *or* false things about them. Unfortunately for Meinong, though most fortunately for the course of subsequent philosophy, he could not prevent some of his higher-order Objects from infringing the laws of logic. Like his contemporary Frege, who reached a similar position by an independent path, he had to accept as authentic the credentials of certain *entia rationis* which would not pass muster with the law of Excluded Middle.

In short, like Russell in his *Principles of Mathematics*, he swallowed whole the hallowed doctrine of Terms, and accordingly construed as names of genuine Terms all expressions which could stand with grammatical correctness as subjects of verbs. He merely de-psychologised by hypostatising whatever satisfied this inexacting test of what constitutes a term. In him and in general, the logical Objectivism which was rife from 1890 to 1910, was, very roughly, Mills's logic refracted through a Platonic prism.

It is of historical interest to note that at the time that Russell was working out his salvation by his (and Frege's) doctrine of "incomplete symbols," Brentano and Marty were operating with what was in effect the same weapon. They found that Meinong's grotesque conclusions derived from the assumption that all grammatical nominatives are the names of authentic terms, and are, in the old parlance "categorematic" or, as they put it "autosemantic" expressions. Instead, they argued, many such nominatives share at least part of the expressive functions of "syncategorematic" or "synsemantic" expressions. They "mean" not by denoting objects but by contributing to the expression of integral propositions. They belong to what is left in skeleton-sentences, after names have been struck out of them; or what they signify is part of what is common to formally similar propositions about different Terms. They belong not to the directories but to the work-sheets of thought.

Husserl began publication as a loyal disciple of Brentano. His first concern was to improve from inside the empiricist psychology of mathematical thinking, which he tried to do by giving an intentionalist but still psychological account of the genesis and manipulation of mathematical ideas. At this stage, though interested in the work of Boole, Schröder and Frege, he was not effectively influenced by it. By 1900 he had seen the light. In the first edition of his *Logische Untersuchungen*, which he wrote with the intention of discovering the true bases of mathematics, his first task was to demolish the principles and procedure of "psychologism"—meaning by "psychologism" any theory which reduces the description of what we think to descriptions of the internal processes through which we come to think it. Like Frege and the long-forgotten Bolzano, and considerably influenced by them, he argued against any attempt to subordinate logic and mathematics to empirical psychology. His premisses and many of his results were, not unnaturally, closely similar to those of Meinong, though this similarity neither led to nor derived from any personal sympathies between the two scions of Brentano.

Husserl, like Meinong, resolved, in effect, the old problems of abstraction by denying that abstract ideas were either ideas in the mind or abstractions. They are higher-order entities, non-actual but authentic, subsistent Terms. There *are* numbers, universals, classes, relations and propositions. "Abstraction" is just a misnomer for our procedures in coming to apprehend them.

Much of the later parts of this edition of the *Logische Untersuchungen* (in my opinion much his best written and best argued book) is devoted not to the classification of his higher-order objects but to the reconstruction of epistemology and "Denkpsychologie." He repudiates "psychologism," but is still largely if not chiefly interested in applying the consequential reforms to the theory of knowledge. It was, however, the earlier parts of the book which influenced German thought in the first decade of this century. His anti-psychologism and his ultra-Platonism won converts, while his philosophy of mind remained almost unnoticed. (He aroused almost no interest in the English-speaking world at this time. His thunder had been stolen by Meinong and Frege on the Continent, by Moore and Russell at Cambridge, and by Cook Wilson in Oxford. His message was *démodé* before it was heard of.) Husserl's next publications in and after 1913 caused both surprise and disappointment in Germany. He had changed direction once again. Weary, perhaps, of being treated as a partner or disciple of Meinong, or else perhaps half-hankering to come back to the disapproving Brentano's heel, he began to soft-pedal his ultra-Platonism (which he never, I think, disavowed) and returned instead to philosophical psychology, to the philosophical demarcation of the genera and species of acts of consciousness. He ennobled this branch of philosophical enquiry with the quaint title "Phenomenology"; he credited it with a proprietary method which he calls "essential" or "exemplary intuition"; and he claimed for it an absolute logical priority over all other philosophical, scientific, or historical enquiries. These three points all require some elucidation. (1) Brentano had employed the word "Phenomena," not in its customary disparaging sense, but in a new honorific sense. The acts and processes of consciousness being self-presenting (and not representatively perceived) are realities which necessarily also appear. They cannot be without being inwardly perceived; and the perception of them is incapable of being delusive. So psychology, unlike the physical sciences, starts with hard data or "phenomena." Even knowledge of the non-mental has to be mediated by the direct inner perception of the acts and states of their knower's own mind. This is why Husserl calls his philosophy of mind "Phenomenology." Its subject-matter coincides with or overlaps that of

Descartes, Locke or Kant as well, of course, as with that of empirical psychology. But it differs from both in the sorts of problems it has to solve and especially in the special method it employs for solving them.

(2) Husserl retained enough Platonism to believe that some "essences" or generic concepts, namely those the instances of which are self-presenting, can be explored by a process of direct inspection. Somewhat as I can study a daisy with my eyes, so I can with my intellect look hard at Memory, Creative Fancy or Contempt. I can detect by non-inferential inspection what it is that their actual or imagined instances exemplify. To do this I must discard presuppositions and hypotheses and, what is harder, train myself to look away from what usually interests me and concentrate on what I usually ignore. Namely, I must cease, for the moment, to participate in the world in order to study the various ways-of-participating-in-the-world. Daily life must be put into inverted commas, so that I may become able to consider what constitutes daily life. I must lower my telescope from my eye if I am to look at it.

It follows, as Husserl allows and insists, that different observers of these mental essences both can and should pool their results. There could and should be a central register of the (eidetic) observations made by all properly trained phenomenologists. Their results can only be false or discrepant if instead of recording observations they record the conclusions of theories. There is nothing in Phenomenology to argue.

This point merits some debate. It is common ground to Platonists and non-Platonists that we can first learn and finally know how to think *with* concepts. We can ask intelligent questions, we can intelligently debate answers to them, and in some cases we can decide these questions. Concepts are intelligently used in ordinary thinking. But according to Platonist theories the intelligent employment of concepts presupposes a prior non-judgmatic apprehension of some higher-order entities known as "universals." This apprehension would be something like Husserl's "essential intuition" (his reasons for restricting this eidetic inspection to the generic and specific concepts of mental acts and attitudes need not here be considered).

Yet the moment we are told by Husserl that there is a process of directly contemplating universals we feel a certain scruple. For we know quite well not only that there do not in fact occur any such contemplations but, more, that there is some absurdity in supposing that there should. What is the source of this scruple? For the doctrine is widely regarded as at least respectable, which holds that the using of concepts does presuppose the finding of special entities; yet explicit talk about this finding does cause a sense of intellectual embarrassment. Why is it not merely a tasteless metaphor but a flat impropriety to speak of "peering at Remorse," "gazing at Induction," "taking a long look at Choice," or "happening to light on Conscience"?

If we consider the intelligent use of some of the recognized syncategorematic words (sometimes called "form-words" or "logical constants") such as "if," "and," "not," "exists," "some," "all," etc., and ask whether they stand for Terms in the way in which "Fido" stands for Fido, we have to reply that they do not. Else, among other objections, a sentence of seven words would be just a list of seven things and so not be a sentence. It would not express a proposition. None the less these words are significant, but *not* in the sense that they stand in the "Fido"–Fido relation to anything. Moreover, their significations can be elucidated by a certain procedure, though this procedure does not consist in acquainting or re-acquainting ourselves with their nominees. For they are not names. The procedure consists in showing, e.g. how "if"-propositions behave differently from "because"-propositions; how "or" propositions behave differently from "and"-propositions, and how "any"-

propositions behave differently from "some"-propositions and from "Socrates"-propositions. We elucidate their significations by fixing the rules of their uses and not by any operation of gazing at any wearers of labels. The elucidation of "non-formal" conception-words is performed in the same way, for "non-formal" concepts, like Conscience and Hope, differ from formal concepts not as flesh differs from bone, but as bodies differ from skeletons, or as partly filled cheques differ from blank cheques. They, too, are abstractions from integral propositions and they embody the logical structures of those propositions. Thought does not begin with a vocabulary and then trick this vocabulary out with a syntax; its vocabulary is syntactical from the start. The intelligent use of concepts in thinking does not, therefore, presuppose a pre-judgmatic finding of entities of which concept-words are names, for concept-words, formal or non-formal, are syncategorematic. It is, therefore, nonsense (as we felt in our bones) to speak of "intuiting essences." The proprietary method claimed for Phenomenology is a sham, and Phenomenology, if it moves at all, moves only by the procedures by which all good philosophers have always advanced the elucidation of concepts, including consciousness-concepts.

Husserl's practice bears this out. He does often produce acute and sometimes original and illuminating elucidations of such concepts. But he does so not by barely "constatating." He argues. Nor does he barely record the constatations of other Phenomenologists. If he mentions them at all, he champions them, and correlates them with the rest of his system.

3. The large claims made by Husserl for Phenomenology as the one presuppositionless theory underlying all other theories naturally expanded in his later years, when what had been an ambitious methodology burgeoned into a full Cartesian metaphysic. Not merely was the theory of Mind logically prior to all the other branches of theory, but Mind became the source or home of all existence.

I think, but am not sure, that these conclusions issued from the following mis-reasoning.

(*a*) Accepting the (to me questionable) axiom of Brentano that acts of consciousness are and alone are self-presenting, it seemed to follow that my knowledge or probable hypotheses about other existences must rest on absolute knowledge of the existence of my mental processes and states. Hence the classification and anatomy of the genera and species of my mental acts is necessary for the proper understanding of my propositions about everything else. The verification of all other propositions entails the self-verification of various sorts of "cogito"–propositions and the ways or senses in which other things can be said to exist are pensioners of the self-established existence of my cogitatings. My world is what I think, perceive, imagine, lament, etc., and my thinking, perceiving, imagining, lamenting, etc., are not constituents of that world but its Constitution.

(*b*) Husserl, with other members of Brentano's school, early acquired the hazardous habit of assimilating the (supposedly simply) relations between acts of consciousness and their intentional objects to the (supposedly simple) relations between symbols and what they stand for. Indeed, it was assumed that to explore the signification of our symbols was to explore what are "intended" by our intentional experiences. So yesterday's headache was described as the "meaning" of to-day's memory of it. And as it is patent that our symbols mean what they do because we endow them with that function, it seemed to follow that our thinkings, etc., are responsible for their objects. As credits only exist if banks give credit, so the various objects of consciousness, including all higher-order objects, only exist because consciousness

gives them their existence and their characters. Since intentionality or "transitivity" is an internal property of consciousness, not only the having-of-objects but the objects-had are analytically contained in the descriptions of the experiences which have them. Brentano's Revised Version of Locke's theory of "ideas" has developed into a Revised Version of Mill's.

Mr. Farber's *The Foundations of Phenomenology* gives a very useful and thorough account of Husserl's development. Mr. Farber is avowedly a loyal disciple of Husserl in all but his final Cartesian Solipsism, and his book is published under the auspices of the International Phenomenological Society. He endorses most of the large claims made by Husserl for his new science, and has made a gallant attempt to paraphrase for Anglo-Saxon readers the whole of Husserl's esoteric terminology. (But he should not render "Evidenz" by "evidence"; only "self-evidence" carries the intended force.) His well-documented account of Husserl's early interests and affiliations is of considerable historical interest. With a few minor exceptions the 570 odd pages of this book are expository and not critical.

I do not expect that even the corporate zeal of the International Phenomenological Institute will succeed in winning for Husserl's ideas much of a vogue in the English-speaking world. When Husserl inherited in the early years of this century his master's "Messiasbewusstsein" he lost what humour he had ever possessed as well as nearly all his original clarity and vigour of style. Dazzled by the independence and originality of his own new system, he ceased to take cognisance of the views or problems of any other philosophers. Deaf to the language of others, he found that the appropriate expressions for his own discoveries required an independent mint, and he accordingly coined a vast jargon of his own which subserves, apparently, the ends neither of brevity nor perspicuity.

Had his writings and teachings consisted even largely of his positive analyses of psychological concepts, a good deal of value would have been got from them. For despite his erroneous conviction that his method was novel, many of his particular results are fresh. But instead, the great bulk of his labours was devoted to the profitless tasks of promising epoch-making results and of demarcating the sub-faculties of his new science. The drafting of constitutions for future research-organisations does not stimulate those who have yet to be satisfied that the promised organisations have any function. We should have been better satisfied with bigger slices of pudding and fewer pots and pans.

In short, Phenomenology was, from its birth, a bore. Its over-solemnity of manner more than its equivocal lineage will secure that its lofty claims are ignored.

On the other hand there is now in vogue in Germany, and, oddly, in France an offshoot of Phenomenology, known as "Existentialism," which may well be smuggled overseas in someone's warming-pan. For it is a part of culture to believe that all culture comes from Paris, so Martin Heidegger's graft upon his former master's stock is not unlikely before long to be adorning Anglo-Saxon gardens.

Apparently what has happened is this (I do not vouch for the whole story): Husserl had, like Aristotle, discerned several different senses of the verbs "to be" and "exist." Unlike Aristotle he correlated these differences with differences between the various moods and inflections of consciousness. The *radical* sense of "exist" is that recorded in the slogan *Cogito ergo sum*. The most primitive and basic mode of consciousness is "the having of ideas" (*Vorstellung*). All other modes of consciousness are founded in the having of ideas. Heidegger retained the intentionality-dogma, but rejected, perhaps

as over intellectualistic, the axiom that consciousness first realises itself in the having of ideas. Feelings, for example, are at least as directly constitutive of my world as are ideas or concepts, and the latter are not presupposed in the former.

None the less he continued to speak of the "meanings" of acts of consciousness and to equate my world with the conglomeration of these meanings (although in the beginning this incautious ascription of "meanings" to acts of consciousness had been just an elaboration of the Lockean theory of ideas).

I *think* Heidegger or members of his school hold that idea and judgments, so far from underlying feelings and volitions, are supervenient constructions or efflorescences of them. Not, therefore, "in the beginning was the Word" but "in the beginning was the cry."

The Existentialists also (again, I *think*) adhere to the proprietary intuitions of Husserl, oblivious of the fact that the case for their existing rested upon a Platonised reconstruction of Mills's doctrine of Idea-Terms. At least the language of some of the members of the school has the Eleusinian ring of intuitionism. It is not made forensic by argument. Part of the popularity of the new creed is doubtless due to its momentary congeniality to the territories of despair. Lack of hope tends to result in the multiplication of faiths, so lands west of the North Sea may also be ripe for similar evangelisation.

GILBERT RYLE.

The Analysis of Social Change: based on observations in Central Africa. By GODFREY and MONICA WILSON. (Cambridge University Press. 1945. Pp. 177. Price 7s. 6d.)

It is very difficult to give a fair picture of this remarkable little book and quite impossible to summarize it. Between its preliminary and final analyses of contemporary conditions and problems in Central Africa it offers, in the space of little more than a hundred pages, a complete theory of social structure and social change. This owes much to Durkheim, but its scope is even wider than that of his classic work *De la division du travail social*. The argument is enormously condensed, and the authors demand a great effort on the part of the reader, who is obliged continually to pause and work out for himself the full meaning and implications of their words before he can either accept or reject their propositions. The task is sometimes rendered unnecessarily difficult by certain apparent inaccuracies and inconsistencies of language.

The central idea is that of scale. Social change is change in scale, disequilibrium is unevenness of scale. This being so, it is important to know exactly what is meant by scale and how differences of scale can be recognized or measured. But it is precisely here that confusion arises, and mainly for two reasons. First, the authors define scale in terms of several factors which cannot be reduced, by any method of weighting, to a single index. Secondly, they are determined to relate all aspects of social structure and change, through "necessary connections," to this one composite concept, and strain their arguments to the breaking-point in doing so.

Scale is defined as "the number of people in relation and the intensity of those relations" (p. 25). Now it should first be noted that "intensity" is not used here as Durkheim used it; it corresponds rather to his term "density," but it is more comprehensive. Durkheim distinguished between a number of related phenomena. The division of labour, the central object of his study, was not for him identical with "moral density," but conditional on it. "Moral density" in turn was stimulated by "material density" (or physical concentration) and by "volume" (or number of persons in contact).

But Mr. and Mrs. Wilson appear to amalgamate these phenomena into a single index of scale—or rather endeavour unsuccessfully to do so. And they still further complicate their task by including among "relations" those with the past as well as those with contemporaries. This emphasis on the significance of the degree of dependence on the past, together with the demonstration that this is less in primitive than in civilized societies, is valuable in itself, but the attempt to combine past and present by simple addition fails. It soon appears, for instance, that the measurement of relations with the past is not so much by persons as by generations—the survival of the work of one man seven generations back counts for more than the contributions of seven men one generation back.

Further confusion arises when we examine the meaning of "intensity." It is conceived in terms of a number of criteria, such as economic co-operation, communication of fact and emotional expression, and the value set on unity and continuity. Economic intensity in a given group is measured "by the proportion of economic co-operation within that group to the total economic co-operation of the society" (p. 26). If this means what it says, then the ratio depends primarily on the relative sizes of the group and the society and not, as one might have expected, on the degree of concentration of economic activity within the group. But in any case the theme of the book is the scale of societies, not of groups, and where do we then find the second term in the ratio? And further, the authors state that "the intensity of relations is the same in all societies, but that it may be more or less spread out" (p. 40). If this means anything, then it follows that the scale of a society depends solely on its size. The argument might have been clearer if the word "society" had been used with greater precision.

Social mobility is closely related to scale. We are given two quite different definitions of "the degree of social mobility." It is "the size of the group within which people move freely" (where everything depends on the interpretation of "freely"), and it is measured by "the proportion of movements within a given circle to the total number of movements in the whole society" (p. 99). Later we are told that mobility in respect of marriage in two societies can be compared by comparing "the size of the group within which 60 per cent of the total marriages" in each society are made (p. 100). But which 60 per cent should we choose? And how do we determine the boundaries of a group within which a marriage is made? If a peer marries a chorus girl, what group is thereby brought into our calculations? It would seem that two processes have been amalgamated and confused. One is the plotting of contacts in order to determine the effective boundaries of the area of social co-operation. The other is the measurement of the degree of concentration of social life within a group whose boundaries have already been determined.

The book contains some illuminating passages about magic, science, religion and philosophy, but the attempt to find perfect symmetry in the pattern of change and to tie the whole process up with change in scale leads to questionable conclusions. Magic, we are told, cannot distinguish between cause and motive because it attributes causation to intrinsic qualities. Non-magicality is inseparably connected with impersonality and both are related to largeness of scale, so that "the impersonality of economic relations is a necessary condition of the decline in the belief in witchcraft" (p. 104). This is rather startling. And the proposition involves representing the modern conception of guilt and the growing interest in the motives and personality of the accused as phenomena of impersonality, which is rather a perverse use of language. It might also be suggested that attitudes towards impersonal groups such as the State have more of magic in them than many attitudes

towards identifiable persons. In fact the idea of impersonality needs further analysis, while the development of impersonal relations is not necessarily inconsistent with an accompanying development and enrichment of personal relations.

Enough has been said to show that this book is both puzzling and irritating. But it is also stimulating because, in spite of its defects, it is clearly the work of trenchant minds, and those parts of it which relate to the special area studied are clear and penetrating. The truth may be that it was written too soon. It is certainly much too short, and its brevity is a barrier through which the frustrated reader strives to penetrate to the intriguing, but unfortunately obscure, thoughts of the authors.

T. H. MARSHALL.

A Realistic Philosophy. By K. F. REINHARDT, Ph.D. (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co. 1944. Pp. x + 268. Price ?.)

The *censor librorum* having set his "*Nihil Obstat*," and the Archbishop of Milwaukee, his *imprimatur*, on this book, Dr. Reinhardt is at liberty to expound his realistic philosophy, which, needless to say, follows closely "his master's voice"—good St. Thomas Aquinas. The title of the book must be understood accordingly. It is not a philosophy of Realism in the usual sense. The bibliography, which is the author's working list, is much stronger in theology than philosophy. The reviewer, therefore, started reading expecting no surprise, since the conclusions of anything written under ecclesiastical safe-conduct are necessarily to be found within certain limits. Yet whilst one may regret that any essay upon philosophical subjects should be so shepherded, the book is an excellent exposition of the type of thought it represents. By "realistic" the author means inclusive or synoptic, the philosophy which takes a total view of reality as against that which stresses certain aspects to the neglect of the rest.

Dr. Reinhardt holds that a rational demonstration of the existence of God, as distinct from comprehension of the essence of God, is provided by the "five ways" of Aquinas. The essence, or "whatness," of God, he adds, can be known only by the negative way of declaring what He is not. Even if this demonstration is accepted as such, it, none the less, leaves open no passage by which we can cross from the metaphysical to the religious. It proves, or rather indicates, a world ground, but why identify that world ground with the Father in heaven, accepted by the religious consciousness? It is hard to avoid the impression that the demonstration by rational means of the existence of God results in a Pyrrhic victory, and that the term God is used in different senses by philosophy and by religion.

Dr. Reinhardt includes not only metaphysics but ethics, political and economic philosophy in his review, and in these chapters will be found some of the best material in the whole work. Though of necessity brief, the estimation of the various social and political theories mentioned, is objective and fair-minded.

E. S. WATERHOUSE.

The Open Society and Its Enemies. By K. R. POPPER. 2 vols. (London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd. 1945. Vol. I. The Spell of Plato. Pp. viii + 268. Vol. II. The High Tide of Prophecy: Hegel and Marx. Pp. vi + 352. Price £2 2s.)

This is a work of great interest and significance, stimulating and suggestive throughout, though in some portions extremely irritating. It is written from

the standpoint of a believer in the "open society," the society based on humaneness, reasonableness, equality, freedom and democracy, and is, in the main, devoted to a criticism of some of the representative thinkers and movements that have stood, or been thought to stand, in opposition to development in this direction. But alongside this there is another line of argument which at times seems to occupy the author's attention even more than the first. That is a sustained criticism of various views which he groups together under the title of "Historicism," which he applies to any view that claims to find necessary laws or patterns in history that enable us to prophesy inevitable future developments. It is by no means obvious that there is any logical or necessary connection between these two objects of Dr. Popper's criticism, though doubtless in fact the two have sometimes been combined in the thought of particular thinkers. But it would be perfectly possible to uphold either of them without the other, and there seems at times a certain disconnectedness between the two lines of argument in the book.

After a couple of introductory chapters the rest of the first volume is entirely devoted to Plato, who is severely criticized. The first chapter of the second volume is occupied by a somewhat perfunctory criticism of Aristotle with a page or two on the beginnings of Christian thought. We then make a big jump. There is only a word or two about the Middle Ages, and nothing about the thought of the Reformation, or Machiavelli or Hobbes or any of the theories of Absolutism developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We begin again with Hegel, to whom a chapter of unsparing attack, both on personal and philosophical grounds, is devoted, an attack so virulent that its most likely effect would be to produce a reaction in favour of the victim. But the bulk of the volume is occupied by a detailed study and criticism of Marx. And the book ends with three more general chapters, in which some representative contemporary thinkers are briefly dealt with. In these last chapters the criticism of Historicism occupies the centre of the stage for the greater part of the time.

Dr. Popper's virtues are manifold. He has a wide range of learning, and a comprehensive grasp of the connections of things. He has a scrupulous conscience about exact references and gives chapter and verse for all he says. Even those who disagree with his interpretations can often find material for their refutation under his guidance. He has a great fertility of ideas. Almost every sentence gives us something to think about, so much so, indeed, that a would-be reviewer finds it difficult to know where to stop in discussing all the suggestive and debatable points that Dr. Popper raises. Above all, in the things that he wants and does not want for human beings, he is, in my judgment at any rate, in the main on the side of the angels.

As against this, there are, I am afraid it must be said, grave defects displayed in the book. Like many people who are enthusiastic about toleration as a policy, Dr. Popper is, too often, intellectually extremely intolerant. Once an author has been placed on his black list, he must be wholly bad and everything he says must be interpreted in the most unfavourable sense. Connected with that, is an undue liking for disposing of the objects of his dislike by the attribution of discreditable motives, either conscious or unconscious, to them, and even to modern scholars who defend them. He would be wise to reflect that the attribution of motives, like the use of poisoned gas in warfare, is a dangerous weapon in controversy. For it can be used on either side, and there is no knowing beforehand which side will gain most advantage from it. Dr. Popper seems at times to be well aware of this, and in one passage (II. 203) there is an admirably phrased protest against "the tendency to unveil the hidden motives behind our actions" as a method of

dealing with views which are disliked. It is a pity that he so often seems to forget his own warning.

Another weakness, as it seems to me, is an excessive fondness for classifying and labelling the various views with which he deals. There is a positively terrific list of labels. Besides familiar terms, such as totalitarianism or individualism, there is historicism, already mentioned, historism (to be distinguished from historicism), psychologism, protectionism (nothing to do with tariffs!), interventionism, institutionalism, personalism, critical dualism, spiritual naturalism, and many others. This might be merely a personal foible. But it certainly seems to me at times that Dr. Popper unwittingly inclines towards a sort of scholastic realism with regard to these general terms, and tends to think of the 'isms as the real substantial facts and the actual opinions of concrete individuals as merely imperfect derivatives of these, to be interpreted in the light of them. That is, of course, far from his intention. Indeed, he warns us against this danger. But I cannot help feeling that, here again, he often forgets his own warning.

There are other more general faults, some of which are the reverse side of his virtues. Thus his extreme fertility in ideas and the number of points which he sees as calling for discussion certainly add to the interest and stimulus of the book. But it also means that the available space is so packed with points of discussion that hardly any of them are adequately dealt with, and we are too often left with the impression of a hasty and perfunctory dismissal of a point without really going to the root of it. In general, I think that this impression would be unfair to Dr. Popper. But, as it stands, there are several passages advocating or criticizing particular points of view which would seem to anyone, not already fully convinced, to remain very much on the surface and never to touch the real points at issue. As instances of this I would refer to his off-hand dismissal of nationalism (II. 47 *et seq.*), his criticisms of the doctrines he labels "psychologism" (II. ch. xiv) and "spiritual naturalism" (I. 61) and his advocacy of the doctrine of "critical dualism" (I. 51 *et seq.*).

These varying qualities are shown in differing degrees in different parts of the book. It is particularly instructive to compare his methods of approach to the two authors who occupy the greater part of his attention, Marx and Plato.

In his approach to Marx he makes every attempt to achieve a sympathetic understanding of him before criticizing. He sets out with the determination, as he says, "to emphasize especially such of his views as I believe to be of lasting merit" (II. 84). And in what follows, though he is critical of Marx, he is never merely fault-finding. He sees, for instance, that a theory which we should reject as false may still be regarded as playing a valuable part in the development of our ideas by "trying out" a certain line of thought and showing where it leads to. He sees, again, that it is possible to learn a good deal of value from a theory that we finally disagree with, in so far as it may open up lines of thought which we can follow with profit for a certain distance without going the whole length with the author. He sees that any actual theory (as opposed to an abstract 'ism) does not form a solid block which must be accepted or rejected as a whole but contains different elements, which can often be judged separately from each other. And he sees that even an erroneous theory may be of value in correcting extremes in the opposite direction. I am inclined to think that in places he considerably exaggerates the corrective services of Marx. But that is a fault on the right side. The result of this line of approach is that when he does come to criticize Marx his criticisms are, in general, irrefutable.

How different is his attitude when he comes to Plato! Here the atmosphere is much more that of a trial for heresy before the Inquisition with Dr. Popper as the prosecuting counsel. There is no question of any attempt at sympathetic understanding or discrimination. Everything is to be interpreted to show Plato's views in the worst light. Not only are his general doctrines discussed in that spirit, but the dialogues are combed for individual passages or even sentences which will strengthen the case for the prosecution. I feel bound to say that his use of this method shows Dr. Popper at his worst. Quite casual remarks in passing are taken out of their context and given an entirely disproportionate importance, if they can be interpreted unfavourably. Other remarks which might have served to modify this interpretation are generally ignored; if they are quoted they are explained away or dismissed as evidence of Plato's inconsistency or even of his dishonesty. In a considerable number of cases Dr. Popper's interpretation is obviously highly debatable, and often, in my judgment, plainly false and even fantastic. Further, a number of alleged historical facts to Plato's discredit are set down as established truths, whereas in fact they rest on extremely dubious evidence and in some cases are pretty certainly false. It would be possible to find stories based on no worse evidence than these which would be much more to Plato's credit, but none of them are mentioned. Finally, there is a free use of the discovery, or rather allegation, of the hidden motives behind Plato's views, which must in the nature of things be pure speculation. I should have liked to have given a detailed list of these things, but that would extend this review far beyond the permissible limits.

In the more general criticisms of Plato's views we find the same one-sidedness and exaggeration. Some of them are directed against points which really do deserve criticism, and a balanced judgment on these would be welcome. But Dr. Popper always spoils his case by over-statement. Thus it would be perfectly fair criticism to argue that Plato lays too much stress on duty towards the community as compared with morality between individuals. But it would not be true at all to say that he ignores the latter, and that his sole standard of right was the interests of the State, even the best State. On the other hand, some criticisms seem to me entirely without foundation. Thus the attribution of "historicism," even in a modified form, to Plato is, I should say, wholly false. To establish it Dr. Popper has to argue that the account of the various inferior constitutions towards the end of the *Republic* was meant to be a generalization from actual experience of necessary historical laws of development. And to make this plausible he has to argue, further, that Plato believed the ideal State of the *Republic* to be identical with the primitive state of society which actually existed once and to which he longed to return. But this is certainly not the case. We have indications in more than one passage of what Plato thought primitive society was, or might be, like, and it has no resemblance at all to the State of the *Republic*. And it is, I should have thought, quite obviously implied that the ideal State of the *Republic* never had in fact existed, and perhaps never could exist in its completeness. This misinterpretation accounts in part I think for Dr. Popper's misunderstanding of Plato's views about the dangers of change.

There are other points on which I should be inclined to say that Plato is more in the right than Dr. Popper. Thus, Plato is criticized for having "created a lasting confusion in political philosophy . . . by expressing the problem of politics in the form 'Who should rule.'" The real question that should be asked, according to Dr. Popper, is "How can we organize political institutions so that bad or incompetent rulers can be prevented from doing too much damage?" It is undoubtedly true that Plato does devote a good deal of

attention to the first question, though it is absurd to suggest that he was the first to put the question in this form. It was a standard subject of discussion generations before his time, as we can see, for instance, from Herodotus. But I remain entirely unconvinced that Plato and the other Greeks were wrong to discuss this question. I can see very little force in Dr. Popper's arguments on this point. Further, it ought to be obvious that the two questions are not in any sense mutually exclusive alternatives, and it is perfectly possible to discuss them both. Plato was certainly not unmindful of the latter question. It occupies a good deal of his attention in the *Politicus*, a dialogue which Dr. Popper, except for one or two casual references, ignores. But, in general, all this discussion illustrates Dr. Popper's constant tendency to think in terms of extremes. He has a horror of anything in the nature of authority or leadership which seems at times almost pathological. I have no doubt that, if I were to adopt his controversial methods, I could think of various plausible psycho-analytic explanations of it.

The same tendency can be detected elsewhere. Dr. Popper sees that Plato has to be judged against his historical background, though he objects, quite rightly in my opinion, to any attempt to explain a thinker entirely as the product of a particular historical situation. But his method of doing this is hardly to be admired. I do not think it is unfair to say that the *prima facie* assumption of his argument is that, as Plato is wholly bad, anyone or anything that he criticizes is probable wholly good, at any rate in the points on which he criticizes them. Thus, Dr. Popper greatly over-idealizes the Athenian democracy (not to speak of other Greek democracies which, there is good reason to think, Plato had in mind in his criticisms), ascribes virtues to it which it did not possess and ignores or condones its obvious faults. Again, he constructs with quite unwarranted confidence systematic accounts of the views held by various thinkers of the time, of whom in fact we know nothing beyond a few fragments. Some of these reconstructions have a certain degree of plausibility, some very little. But he uses them without hesitation as a basis for attacks on Plato. Thus, he accuses him of misrepresentation on the grounds that the views that he, Dr. Popper, thinks, on very slight grounds, must have been held by certain writers whom he thinks, on even slighter grounds, Plato must have had in mind in his criticisms, do not, in fact, coincide with the views that Plato actually criticizes. There is no justification for this. And, in general, Dr. Popper, to my mind, misrepresents the whole character of the developments of the period by trying to force them all in on one side or the other of the single issue between the "closed" and "open" societies. The attempt to introduce the categories, and even the emotions, of the contemporary situation into our study of the ancient world may be harmless, and occasionally even helpful, up to a point, but it has great dangers, and certainly leads Dr. Popper seriously astray. He sees Plato all askew because he is always trying to squint round the corner in order to catch a glimpse of the figure of Hitler somewhere in the background.

Dr. Popper is fond of saying, like other more irresponsible writers, that anyone who takes a less unfavourable view of Plato than he does is "idealizing" Plato. This is, of course, easy to say, and may mean much or little. If it means that they think that all Plato's views are right, it is, of course, untrue. To object to obvious misrepresentations of Plato does not imply agreement with all his opinions. But there is another sense in which something that those who do not like a particular thinker might call "idealization" of him, is no bad thing. It is, indeed, an essential condition of any genuine understanding of a serious thinker to begin by approaching him sympathetically, to try to put ourselves at his point of view and to follow the process of his

thought as if it were our own. When we have done that we can proceed to criticize him as we will. But, if we begin by assuming that he is on the wrong side and that we must therefore look for anything that can be said against him, we shall inevitably fail to understand him, and our conjectures and inferences as to what he must have meant are almost bound to go astray. Dr. Popper sees this clearly enough when he is dealing with Marx. It is a pity that he did not attempt the same approach to Plato.

I suspect that part, at any rate, of the trouble here would have to be traced back to Dr. Popper's views on the nature of historical knowledge. He emphasizes the obvious impossibility of complete knowledge of the facts of the past, and the consequent impossibility of complete objectivity in our approach to them. For we have to select, and our selection must be guided by some interest. And "since each generation has its own troubles and problems, and therefore its own interests and its own point of view, it follows that each generation has a right to look upon and reinterpret history in its own way. . . ." For instance, at the present day we can study the history of political power "with an eye to those problems of power politics whose solution we choose to attempt in our time. We can interpret the history of power politics from the point of view of our fight for the open society. . . ." Now there is undoubtedly a considerable degree of truth in all this, and a great deal will depend on how it is interpreted in practice. But it can very easily be interpreted in a dangerously one-sided manner, and when I examine Dr. Popper's actual use of this approach I am inclined to feel that he does so interpret it. I cannot think he really appreciates the sort of objectivity that is applicable to historical study. What that is cannot be easily defined in a few phrases, and a longer discussion would be impossible here. But I would suggest the possibility that the despised "historicists" and "historists," particularly the latter, whose doctrines I should agree with Dr. Popper in rejecting as they stood, may turn out to have caught a one-sided and distorted glimpse of truths which Dr. Popper has missed altogether.

G. C. Field.

Physics and Experience. By Bertrand Russell. The Henry Sidgwick Lecture Delivered at Newnham College, Cambridge. November 10, 1945. (1946. Cambridge University Press. Pp. 26. Price 1s. 6d.)

The topic considered in this lecture was discussed by Bertrand Russell in the volume *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell* in his reply to Mr. Nagel, a brief account of which was given in the review of the book in *Philosophy* for July 1945. In this lecture he begins by putting it in the form: "Assuming physics to be broadly speaking true, can we know it to be true, and, if the answer is in the affirmative, does this involve knowledge of other truths besides those of physics?" (5).

The problem arises from the assumption that perception is our primary source of direct knowledge, together with the fact that the entities physics asserts to exist have no similarity whatever with what is perceived.

Certain preliminary steps are taken to simplify the problem. Three points are made: firstly, that there is no distinction between the perceiving of a percept and the occurrence of the percept, and that this occurrence takes place in the physical brain in physical space, and is a member of a causal chain of physical events. The second point is, that the distinction between what is mental and what is physical is not ontological, but epistemological, that is to say it turns not on the possession of any special characteristics, but only on the way in which events are known; "a 'mental' event is one

which someone knows otherwise than by inference" (16). The third point is, that "mental" space—space directly perceived—is distinct from physical space, and the perceptual objects in it are distinct from the objects asserted by physics to be in physical space.

The first two points change the old metaphysical problem of understanding how anything outside the mind could be known to exist, into the epistemological one of how from direct information about some events one can infer something about other causally connected events. The third point is needed in order to avoid contradiction between the perceived relations between perceived objects and the relations between physical objects inferred from these.

He is then in a position to deal with his problem—which it must be remembered is not the problem of how from perception physics can be inferred, but rather the problem, assuming the truth of physics, of "what there is in its laws which justifies inferences from percepts to physical objects" (19).

The answer is as follows: (i) It is noted as a preliminary that physical space is "constructed by means of causal laws combined with the postulate of spatio-temporal causal contiguity, or denial of action at a distance" (15–16). The events which constitute my perceptions are in the physical space so constructed, and I take it that we can say in general that, on his view, other physical objects are located in physical space through their causal relations to my perceptions and to each other.

(ii) It follows that if there is a causal chain, from an unperceived physical object, to a percept, which is separable from other causal chains, then this percept can be used as basis for an inference to this physical object; but if the causal chain from a physical object to a percept is at any point of its path modified by the interference of a different causal chain, coming from a different physical object, then no such inference is possible. Now in some cases, e.g. in the case of vision, physics assures us that under certain conditions light waves from an object "pursue their course practically unaffected by other light waves in the same region" (23). Under such conditions each separate object I perceive can be correlated with a separate physical object somewhere along the causal chain. But of course the conditions are complex, and the correlation is by no means simple. There may be complications within my body. It is a part of the technique of physical science to discover ways of making this correlation more precise and less liable to error, (*a*) by studying the differences in the conditions within the bodies of different observers, so as to arrive at the conception of a normal observer, differences in whose perceptions could be in general correlated with different causal chains outside his body, and (*b*) by correcting inferences derived from one observer assumed normal, through inferences derived from a multitude of other observers.

(iii) The third point is merely mentioned as a tailpiece and not discussed. It is this. Why should we take statements about causal chains to be any more than statements giving rules, within each individual's perceptual world, through which he can foretell that percepts he is likely to have under particular conditions? What justifies our taking them as rules for the setting out of physical objects in physical space?

The answer is given by pointing to a principle "which is used both by science and by common sense, to the effect that, when a number of phenomena in separated parts of space-time are obviously causally connected, there must be some continuous process in the intervening regions which links them all together" (25). It is noted that this principle must be regarded as provisional until "the inference from perceptual to physical space" has been examined: and there the matter is left, so far as the present lecture is concerned.

It is a pity that the principle was left without discussion. It is most intriguing as it stands. As used by common sense, the principle is applied to perceptual objects in perceptual space, assumed as identical with physical objects in physical space. But if the entire perceptual space of a given observer at a given moment is to be located in a particular part of his brain at that moment, then it would appear that he would never have any right to say that "a number of phenomena in separated parts of space-time are obviously causally connected," if by "phenomena" he means physical events and by "space-time" he means physical space-time.

The main point I shall discuss concerns the part played by common sense in the whole development; for science is treated as arising out of the common-sense view of the world, and as providing more exact methods of doing what common sense is doing incorrectly and inexactly.

Firstly, we are told, common sense vouches for the "physical causation of perception." When we shut our eyes we do not see; what we see is different when we look in a different direction: and so on (7). This, however, was on the assumption that the body we perceive, and the space we perceive it in, are physical; and this has to be corrected. "The spatial relations of physics hold between electrons, protons, sentions, etc., which we do not perceive; the spatial relations of visual percepts hold between things that we do perceive, and in the last analysis between coloured patches" (16–17). There are other difficulties we need not go into (17).

Secondly, common sense holds that the sun is always there whether I see it or not, but that I sometimes see it, viz. when I open my eyes and turn them in the right direction, and there is no fog or eclipse, etc. This, too, has to be corrected, for the same reason as before (19).

Thirdly, it is "obvious to educated common sense" that, "whether we consider the percept or the simultaneous state of the brain, the causal location of either is intermediate between occurrences in afferent nerves constituting the stimulus, and occurrences in efferent nerves constituting the reaction" (21).

In that sense is this "obvious to educated common sense?"

The argument on p. 20 which precedes this remark depends on the results of elaborate psycho-physical researches. The question is as to the "location of percepts in causal chains." We have a percept, e.g. hear a noise. This is connected with a physical source, and with the disturbances which travel through the air to the ears, and with the processes between the ears and the brain. The argument runs as follows: "The experience which we call 'hearing the noise' is as nearly as can be determined simultaneous with the cerebral term of the causal chain. If the noise is of the kind to call forth a bodily movement, the movement begins almost immediately after 'hearing the noise.' If we are going to fit 'hearing the noise' into a physical causal chain, we must therefore connect it with the same region of space-time as that of the accompanying cerebral events. And this applies also to the noise as something perceived. The only region of space-time with which this noise has any direct connection is the present state of the hearer's brain; the connection with the physical source of the sound is indirect. Exactly the same argument applies to things seen" (20).

I should not have thought that the experiments which lead to this conclusion do show that "the noise as something perceived" has a direct connection with the brain, and only an indirect connection with the physical source of the sound. If "direct" is equivalent to "directly perceived," this is simply not the case; both connections are inferred, on the basis of elaborate scientific constructions; at the most what could be asserted as directly perceived would be simultaneity of the percept and the cerebral disturbance

(a matter I shall discuss in the next paragraph). If "direct" means spatio-temporal sameness, this can only be said subject to the possibility of our fitting the hearing the noise into the physical causal chain, and even then it can be done only by assuming that hearing the noise is located in a small volume of the organism, and not spread over a wider network of the nervous system: in short, only by assuming the sequence, afferent process, percept, efferent process. (This sequence seems to me doubtful, for various reasons.) And while educated common sense might be persuaded by the psycho-physical expert to fit the hearing of the noise into this chain at a particular point in the brain, it is not clear that it would be willing to fit the heard noise itself into the chain, as something having position in the brain.

It should be noted that while perceived space is sharply distinguished from the space of physics, no such distinction is made between perceived time and the time of physics (18). The reason given for this is that the assumption that the two times are the same does not lead to the kind of complications that arise in the case of space. I should have thought, however, that the account given of perceived objects in perceived space would have its own consequences for time. For time relations as perceived hold between perceived objects, e.g. between the various positions of the bird I see hopping over the grass (I mean of course the seen bird over the seen grass and not the bird of physics over the physical grass). They are not perceived to hold between the events in the brain spoken of by the physiologist, which as spoken of by him are not identical with my percepts of the bird's various positions. On what ground then could we identify the time relations between the brain events as they enter into physiology with the time relations between the various visual positions of the visual hopping bird? It is true that unless we do so we shall have no justification for locating our percepts in the brain part of the causal chain which goes within the body from sensory stimulus to muscular reaction. But this is hardly a sufficient reason for doing so. We could identify these time relations if we could perceive both the visual bird and the physical brain event as described by the physiologist, and note that they were simultaneous. This we cannot do: we can never perceive a time relation between anything but perceived objects.

I find it exceedingly difficult to see how, if we have no awareness of any physical event outside our brain, we can have any way of knowing how physical events outside the brain are correlated with what we perceive. Restricting our direct awareness to events in the brain seems to leave us no better off than when we were restricted to ideas in the mind. It seems necessary to retain something of the common-sense view that we have some kind of awareness of physical objects outside the brain if we are not to have to admit, after all, that if what physics says were true, we should never be able to know it.

I agree that we should get rid of the distinction between mind and matter; that we should place the organism in the physical world and treat its exploration and its becoming aware of the world as events physically conditioned like other events; that we must admit that a great many of the characteristics through which it is aware of the world are to be described as its causal reactions to situations in the world rather than (though I do not want to say "and not" without further discussion) as reproductions of features in the world—like the expansion of the mercury in a thermometer when it goes into a hot place, or the breaking of glass when hit by a stone. But if all our awareness in which our inferences in physics depend is of this kind, informing us only of our own reactions, and not of what they are reactions to, I do not see how we could ever make inferences to anything else. L. J. Russell.

The Autobiography of Giambattista Vico, translated from the Italian by Max Harold Fisch and Thomas Goddard Bergin. Pp. x + 240. (Cornell University Press, New York, 1944; London: Humphrey Milford. Price unstated.)

This volume is the first complete English version of one of Vico's writings. The translators begin with a long introduction designed to serve to introduce also a translation of the *Scienza Nuova* which they hope shortly to publish. On the biographical side this introduction supplements the account of Vico in the Appendix to Croce's *The Philosophy of Giambattista Vico* (which was translated by the late Prof. Collingwood), but the leading ideas of the *Scienza Nuova* are only slightly dealt with, and for a discussion of these readers will still turn to Croce's book.

Vico's interest to-day lies in the fact that he was a pioneer of the "philosophy of history." History in the early eighteenth century was still studied largely as a store-house of moral and political examples. Vico, approaching it from his studies in jurisprudence on the one hand, and in philology on the other, tried to see it in terms of the development of forms of human consciousness. He saw that the Cartesian account of the methods of the physical sciences was inapplicable to the human sciences, and sought for clues to the latter in the "higher criticism" of religious myths and in a study of the concrete images and metaphors embodied in language. The study of the human sciences has made enormous strides since Vico's day, through anthropology, comparative religion, comparative philology, historical jurisprudence, etc., and probably what is of value in Vico's ideas on the philosophy of history and on the symbolic forms of man's thinking has by now been taken up into the work of such writers as Dilthey, Cassirer, Croce, and Collingwood. I suspect that Vico himself may now chiefly be read by people concerned to trace "influences" and "origins" in trends of thought. But I have not studied the *Scienza Nuova* at first hand, and so speak under correction.

The book here translated was first published in 1728 in a periodical of miscellanies (*Raccolta di Opuscoli Scientifici e Filologici*) along with "A Proposal to the Scholars of Italy" to write their autobiographies (or "peri-autotographies") for the edification of young students, Vico's being offered as a model. Philosophical and literary autobiography was then a rarer art than it is now, and we find little analysis of the author's internal mental development (though he does speak of the excitement he got from reading Plato, Tacitus, Bacon, and the fifth book of Lucretius), and considerable regard paid to compliments to personages. Thus Vico tells how he found consolation in adversity in an invitation to compose inscriptions to adorn a chapel for the funeral rites of the Empress Eleanor (mother of the Emperor Charles VI), which inscriptions are given in full and are masterpieces of grandiloquence (we note, however, that they were never put up). On another occasion he wrote an epithalamium to celebrate the marriage of a lady and gentleman of high birth in which the goddess Juno invites the other major gods to dance, improving the occasion by expounding the principles of the historical mythology which is worked out in the *Scienza Nuova*. But these were the manners of the time; and Vico seems to have borne in good part more than the usual share of bad luck, ill-health and professional disappointment, without being deflected from concentrating on his own most original work.

Those (this reviewer is not among them) who are concerned to find clues for the exegesis of *Finnegan's Wake* may be interested to learn that a good number can be supplied from Vico (see the Introduction to the *Autobiography*, p. 97). We were surprised to find (on the same page) Herbert Read described as a "Catholic critic."

Dorothy M. Emmet.

Search for a Social Philosophy. By F. W. Eggleston. (Melbourne and London: Melbourne University Press in association with Oxford University Press. 1941. Pp. 360. Price 15s.)

Circumstances arising from the war have unfortunately long delayed the reviewing of this book, but it is important that those who are interested in political philosophy as well as those who are prepared to take pains to understand the crises of our society and to consider how they may best be relieved, should know of its existence and contents. The author is an Australian of wide legal, administrative, and political experience who is now his country's representative in Washington. In writing this book he has endeavoured to detach himself from the maelstrom of events where his work takes him, in order (*a*) to examine and explain how society has developed, (*b*) to distinguish its principle elements and (*c*) to prognosticate its future.

On (*a*) he is chiefly concerned to show that corresponding to the forms of coherence of society, there is a system of ideas and tendencies to action in each individual, that these systems and the society with which they interlock get elaborated, rationalised and made more effective through the play of natural inequalities among the members, and that the overall tendency has been for individual needs and aims to get greater recognition and scope. In this part of the book Sir F. Eggleston falls into the rather vague but fashionable language of "pattern," "structure," etc., and does not, in my opinion, succeed in breathing much life into his generalisations, although in this respect he is in no worse case than most modern writers on the psychological bases of human society.

The discussion of (*b*), however, is of quite a different quality. Here Sir F. Eggleston distinguishes the parts played by law, politics, economics, war, diplomacy, and morals in the working of society, and says much of value under each of these heads. Law, he says, "is seldom symmetrical, logical, or even intelligent" (p. 127), and the necessity to understand it involves "a sad waste of intellectual effort" (p. 128), but its importance lies in its being the formulation of the essential relations in the society of the individuals to one another, of the individuals to the society as a whole, and of the individuals to the material things (land, houses, food, etc.) they make use of. Politics Sir F. Eggleston deals with as a factual study of the ways in which, in a group not controlled wholly by custom, its integrity is maintained, its behaviour to other groups decided, and its internal changes and stratifications determined. When self-consciousness and individualism have developed, there must be means of obtaining and assessing information (a forum) and processes of arriving at and executing decisions. These features are considered in some detail and the conclusion is reached that their most effective performance is secured when leaders are given opportunities of making decisions and getting them executed, but continue as leaders or are recalled from office according as their policies are regarded as having succeeded or failed. There are very definite limits, however, to what can be achieved by political means, since it is seldom possible to predict how all the interests concerned will behave and the accumulation of a set of unexpected reactions may produce entirely unexpected consequences. Furthermore, legislation is limited by the outlooks and tendencies of those affected, so that truly revolutionary changes can only occur when the people are revolutionized. After some interesting remarks on the varieties of economic theory and their relation to economic facts, Sir F. Eggleston proceeds to a brilliant summary of the merits and defects of the capitalist system at its present stage of development. He does not, as sometimes happens, confine attention to some ideal version of it, but stresses that *laissez-faire* has always been a theory, not a practice, since all

groups have used the state to promote their special interests when they have had the chance to do so. The important thing, therefore, is the nature and extent of state action necessary to alleviate or remove the admitted defects in the system, and Sir F. Eggleston thinks that better results are likely to be obtained by moderate doses of state interference suited to the capacities of the people concerned than by running the risks of breakdown inherent in totalitarian planning. There follows a discussion of international relations and the causes of international conflicts. The unifying element in world affairs is economic, but Sir F. Eggleston does not think that a world state would, even if it were achieved, be a good way of resolving the conflicts, since there is no ground for supposing that an authority based on world economic forces would act more justly than the authorities that arise out of the economic forces that dominate separate states. He suggests that more will be achieved by attempts to limit and reduce particular conflicts, than by setting up new institutions of control, and looks to economic disarmament and the refusal to regard every conflict in the light of the whole balance of forces.

As to (*c*), Sir F. Eggleston stresses the very great dangers to civilization inherent in the present armed system in which war produces such destruction and such new circumstances that resort to it is resort to the unknown. Piecemeal solutions clearly need give and take and how can this be fostered? Sir F. Eggleston thinks that the ethics of the "good neighbour," the essential moral element in Christianity, is all that can save civilization from destroying itself. He does not suggest that any widespread conversion to sainthood is necessary—this would be a hopeless prospect—but argues that the automatic tendencies in society to heal itself are strong so long as they are not, as at present, actively fought against by narrow-minded upholders of the *status quo*. The debater of ideologies often reflect, the most intransigeant un-co-operative elements in society, and it is best, therefore, not to get too deeply involved in such oppositions of ideas. "Ideas have a homicidal record in history" (p. 338).

I am afraid that this brief summary does not do justice to the detail and originality of the book. It is not a book that is philosophical in a technical or professional manner. But it is deeply philosophical in its attempt to assess the categories in terms of which we try to understand society and to get behind the words of current controversies to the facts that they so often mask. It assumes a knowledge that beginners in social theory will not possess, but no one who has acquired a basic knowledge of the subject can fail to derive benefit from this rugged and stimulating work, irrespective of whether he accepts its conclusions.

H. B. Acton.

The Rediscovery of Belief. By Louis Arnaud Reid, D.Litt. (The Lindsey Press. London. 1946. Pp. 204. Price 6s. net.)

Professor Reid is here expressing his views on an urgent practical problem of our times. The decay of belief in a supreme End in human life, as well as the prevalence of false belief in material success or comfort or power, must, he holds, be supplanted by an aim which is the true fulfilment of man's nature, and which enables him to go on developing as his nature demands. Professor Reid finds his answer to this problem in what is fundamental to the Christian faith. He writes as one who has found in this faith his way of life, yet at the same time examines Christian belief and doctrine with a sincerity and intellectual integrity that give value to his conclusions. In expressing these he avoids the conventional language of either the theologian or the

philosopher, and achieves a penetrating lucidity which makes his thought available for every intelligent reader.

It is not fitting that I should here deal with Professor Reid's critical restatement of Christian doctrine and belief, or with the validity of his argument that only through fundamental Christianity as he conceives it can greatness of aim and richness of content be restored to personal and community life. But his account of these matters seems to me to raise a philosophical issue of great importance, the nature of which I will endeavour to indicate.

Professor Reid explains that he is concerned with Ends, and not with means. His primary purpose is not rational interpretation in the limited sense, but beliefs as motivating action and determining the quality of personal experience. At the same time he claims that his argument stands or falls by its truth. What then does he mean by this claim? The criterion of truth in this reference, if there be any criterion, must be very different from that which applies, say, to the validity of the propositions of science. Professor Reid describes certain beliefs as false. Yet, how is it possible to discriminate between the true and the false?

I will represent Professor Reid's meaning by reference to the constructive centre of his argument. For him the most significant character of conscious experience is love, and he finds the highest expression of man's rational endeavour in the humanism that conceives persons as bound in humanity with all men. The essential character of such love (Agape not Eros) becomes manifest in friendship, which brings enlargement and enrichment of personal experience to the participants in an experience purged of self-interest. It begins with desire, but carries the participants beyond desire to the recognition and reverence of human qualities which in themselves are good and as such universal. Thus, through affection for particular persons, genuine love and respect for humanity may be awakened. Such love is the highest peak of humanism, and on it the secular and the religious humanist may meet. Professor Reid goes on to show the limitations of secular humanism. Unaided reason must find the grounds for its affection and respect in qualities that are good; but those that men possess are often repulsive, and put them outside the pale of human consideration. The surmounting of evil transcends the range of human endeavour. For Professor Reid this difficulty is overcome by the revelation of the love of God in Christ. It reveals that love of God and love of man are two aspects of one love, and that human love becomes complete only when it is an expression of the love of God. In so far as this is the case love becomes entirely disinterested, and extends to every man whether worthy or unworthy.

But on what grounds does Professor Reid claim that his beliefs are true? While attempting to discern the significance of Christian revelation he accepts the results of impartial and scholarly examination of the historic events from which it springs. This is essential to the claim but it is not the important ground. What Professor Reid is endeavouring to understand is not recorded facts but living experience. In what sense can a type of experience be true or false? As psychological fact every type is true, but this obviously is not what is meant. Professor Reid is concerned with beliefs as these move to action directed towards the aims which they accept. The claim must be based on the influence of their acceptance. In considering friendship it was found that reciprocal responsiveness between persons, the adjustment of feeling and will as well as of mind, enhanced the richness and value of personal experience. The experience is private and personal, but the good enjoyed is of value in itself, and, provided the conditions are accepted, available for all men. It is argued that this influence finds more perfect expression in Christian

love. But how is it possible to verify the assumption? Only by acceptance of the love-principle as revealed in Christ. The transforming influence must be enjoyed in personal experience, and the assurance of truth follows from the infusion of a universality of expression and disinterestedness of aim not otherwise to be reached by man.

Professor Reid is in no way responible for this statement of his conception, nor does it imply my entire acceptance of the way in which it is here expressed; but the view of truth seems to me important, as well also as the light he has thrown on it by this discussion of a most urgent problem.

G. H. LANGLEY.

Books also received:

CHARLES WATERMAN. *The Three Spheres of Society.* London: Faber and Faber. 1946. Pp. 294. 12s. 6d. net.

SYED 'ABDUL VAHID, B.Sc., B.A. *Iqbal: His Life and Thought.* London: Luzac & Co. Pp, xv + 265. 14s.

ERICH FRANK. *Philosophical Understanding and Religious Truth.* London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press. Pp. x + 210. English price 10s. 6d. net.

GEORGE H. SPELTZ, M.A. (Priest of the Diocese of Winona). *The Importance of Rural Life according to the Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* (A Study in Economic Philosophy). Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America. 1945. Pp. xii + 184. No price quoted.

RACHAEL M. KYDD. *Reason and Conduct in Hume's Treatise* (Oxford Classical and Philosophical Monographs). Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. viii + 196. 12s. 6d. net.

WM. AYLOTT ORTON. *The Liberal Tradition* (A Study of the Social and Spiritual Conditions of Freedom). 1945. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press. London, England: Oxford University Press. Pp. xiv + 317. English price, 23s. 6d. net.

ARTHUR PAP. *The A Priori in Physical Theory.* Morningside Heights, New York: King's Crown Press. London: Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. xii + 102. English price, 13s. 6d.

CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS. *Studies in the Middle Way.* 2nd edition. London: Luzac & Co. 1946. Pp. 136. 6s.

ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY. *Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought* (Collected Essays on the Traditional or "Normal" View of Art. Second Series). London: Luzac & Co. 1946. Pp. 256. 10s. 6d.

MITCHELL SALEM FISHER. *Robert Boyle, Devout Naturalist* (A Study in Science and Religion in the Seventeenth Century). Philadelphia, Pa: Oshiver Studio Press. 1945. Pp. 184. No price quoted.

JAMES F. WALSH, S.J. *Facing Your Social Situation.* Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company. 1946. Pp. xii + 237. 2 dollars 75 cents.

STEPHEN COBURN PEPPER. *The Basis of Criticism in the Arts.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. London: Oxford University Press. 1945. Pp. 177. English price, 14s.

MAURICE J. GRAJEWSKI, O.F.M., M.A., Priest of the Assumption Province. *The Formal Distinction of Duns Scotus. A Study in Metaphysics.* Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America. 1944. Pp. xv + 211. 2 dollars 25 cents.

R. G. COLLINGWOOD. *The Idea of History.* Oxford: at the Clarendon Press. 1946. Pp. xxvi + 340. 20s. net.

ABRAHAM EDEL. *The Theory and Practice of Philosophy.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1946. Pp. xii + 475. 3 dollars.

REV. LEO. A. FOLEY, S.M., M.A. *A Critique of the Philosophy of Being of Alfred North Whitehead in the Light of Thomistic Philosophy.* Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America. 1946. Pp. xii + 169. 2 dollars.

REV. GEORGE M. BUCKLEY, M.M., M.A. *The Nature and Unity of Metaphysics.* Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America. 1946. Pp. xv + 261. 3 dollars.

F. DE HAVAS. *The Equilibrium Theory of the Human Consciousness* (Lecture delivered to the Scottish Section of the British Psychological Society at the University of Glasgow on December 1, 1945). Glasgow: Douglass Macrae. 1946. Pp. 15. 2s. 8d.

PROFESSOR A. GILLIES. *Herder* (Modern Language Studies). Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1945. Pp. 152. 12s. 6d. net.

RENE GUENON. *Introduction to the Study of the Hindu Doctrines.* Trans. by Marco Pallis. London: Luzac & Co., 1945. Pp. 188. 12s. 6d.

RENE GUENON. *Man and His Becoming according to the Vedanta.* Trans. by Richard C. Nicholson. London: Luzac & Co. 1945. Pp. 188. 12s. 6d.

REV. JOHN DUFFY, C.S.S.R., M.A. *A Philosophy of Poetry based on Thomistic Principles.* Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America. 1945. Pp. xi + 258. Price 2 dollars 75 cents.

WM. BROWN, M.D., D.Sc. *Personality and Religion.* London: University of London Press, Ltd. 1946. Pp. 195. 9s. 6d. net.

K. E. BARLOV. *The State of Public Knowledge.* London: Faber and Faber. 1946. Pp. 112. 8s. 6d. net.

JOHN DEWEY. *Problems of Men.* New York: Philosophical Library. 1946. Pp. 424. 5 dollars.

ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY, PROCEEDINGS, 1944–45. London: Harrison & Sons, Ltd. 1945. Pp. xxv + 160. 25s. net.

ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY: Supplementary Volume XIX: *Analysis and Metaphysics.* The Symposia read at the Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association in London, July 13–15, 1945. London: Harrison & Sons, Ltd. 1945. Pp. 288. 15s. net.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, 1944. Pp. 503.

THE ANTIQUARIES JOURNAL (Being the Journal of the Society of Antiquaries of London). Vol. XXVI, Nos. 1, 2. Published by Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. Jan.–April, 1946. Pp. 108. Quarterly: Price 5s. net. Annual Subscription, 18s. 6d. post free.

D. J. B. HAWKINS. *A Sketch of Mediaeval Philosophy.* London: Sheed & Ward. Pp. 148. 6s. net.

LOUIS ARNAUD REID, D.Litt. *The Rediscovery of Belief.* London: The Lindsey Press. 1946. Pp. 204. 6s. net.

MILTON C. NAHM. *Aesthetic Experience and its Presuppositions.* New York and London: Harper & Bros. Pp. xiii + 554. 4 dollars 50 cents.

OLIVE A. WHEELER, D.Sc. *The Adventure of Youth* (The Psychology of Adolescence and its Bearing on the Extension and Reform of Adolescent Education). University of London Press Ltd. 1945. Pp. ix + 212. 6s. net.

MEYRICK H. CARRE. *Realists and Nominalists.* Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. vii + 128. 8s. 6d. net.

KARL KERENYI. *Prometheus* (das Griechische Mythologem von der Menschlichen Existenz). Zurich: Rhein-Verlag. 1946. Pp. 82. Fr. 6.

KARL KERENYI. *Die Geburt der Helena* (samt Humanistischen Schriften aus den Jahren, 1943–5). Zurich; Rhein-Verlag. 1946. Pp. 139. Fr. 8.

CONRAD G. WEBER. *Studies in the English Outlook in the Period between the World Wars*. Berne, Switzerland: A Francke Ag. 1946. Pp. 189. Swiss francs: 8.

WALTER RUEGG. *Cicero und der Humanismus* (formale Untersuchungen über Petrarca u. Erasmus.). Zurich: Rhein-Verlag. 1946. Pp. xxxi + 139. Swiss francs: 10.

KARL KERENYI. *Apollon*. Amsterdam and Leipzig: Akademische Verlagsanstalt Pantheon. 1941. Pp. 290. No price quoted.

C. G. JUNG AND K. KERENYI. *Einführung in das Wesen der Mythologie*. Amsterdam and Leipzig: Akademische Verlagsanstalt Pantheon. 1941. Pp. 251. No price quoted.

KARL KERENYI. *Die Antike Religion*. Amsterdam and Leipzig: Akademische Verlagsanstalt Pantheon. 1942. Pp. 281. No price quoted.

M. F. SCIACCA. *Reid*. Brescia: Società editrice *La Scuola* (series *I Maestri del Pensiero*). 1945. Pp. 118. Price Lire 70.

M. F. SCIACCA. *Pascal*. Brescia: Società editrice *La Scuola* (series *I Maestri del Pensiero*). 1945. Pp. 274. Price Lire 120.

GEORGES FRIEDMAN. *Leibniz et Spinoza*. Paris: Librairie Gallimard. 1946. Pp. 321. No price quoted.

MICHELE FEDERICO SCIACCA. *Il Problema di Dio e della Religione nella Filosofia attuale* (2a Edizione riveducta e aumentata). Brescia: Morcelliana. 1946. Pp. 379. No price quoted.

ABEL REY. *L'Apogée de la Science technique grecque* (les sciences de la nature et de l'homme: les mathematiques d'Hippocrate à Platon). Paris: Editions Albin Michel. 1946. Pp. xx + 316. 190 fr.

JEAN POUILLON. *Temps et roman*. (Collection: La Jeune Philosophie). Paris: Librairie Gallimard. 1946. Pp. 280. 105 fr.

SIMONE PÉTREMENT. *Le Dualisme dans l'Histoire de la Philosophie et des Religions*. Paris: Librairie Gallimard. 1946. Pp. 128. 85 francs.

TIJDSCHRIFT VOOR PHILOSOPHIE. 8e Jahrgang, Nr. 1, 2, 3. (Februari, Mei, Augustus, 1946). Leuven: N.V. Vereeniging voor Wijsgeerige Uitgaven. Utrecht: Uitgeverij het Spectrum. Pp. 1—404 (2 volumes).

E. L. MASCALL. *Christ, the Christian and the Church* (a Study of the Incarnation and its Consequences). London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1946. Pp. xii + 257. 15s. net.

WALTER ULLMANN. *The Mediaeval Idea of Law as represented by Lucas de Penna*. With an introduction by Harold Dexter Hazeltine. London: Methuen & Co., Ltd. 1946. Pp. xxxix + 220. 20s. net.

BENEDETTO CROCE. *Politics and Morals* (Translated from the Italian by Salvatore J. Castiglione). London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 1946. Pp. 138. 8s. 6d. net.

THE REV. GUSTAF J. GUSTAFSON, S.S., M.A., Ph.L. *The Theory of Natural Appetency in the Philosophy of St. Thomas*. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press. 1944. Pp. xii + 125. No price quoted.

A. J. AYER. *Language, Truth and Logic* (Second edition, revised and reset). London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd. Pp. 160. 9s.

MARTIN JOHNSON. *Science and the Meanings of Truth*. London: Faber & Faber. 1946. Pp. 179. 12s. 6d. net.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *Philosophy*

ARTHUR STANLEY EDDINGTON MEMORIAL LECTURESHIP

Dear Sir,

Arthur Stanley Eddington was one of the few recent scientific thinkers of the first rank who have attempted to think out a view of the world which would do justice to all fields of knowledge and experience. Of world-wide fame as an astronomer and mathematician, he combined great powers of scientific and philosophical analysis with a deep religious faith and a practical mysticism which found expression in his active and life-long membership of the Society of Friends, and in his intense concern for the ways of peace. These qualities together with his humility and simplicity, made it possible for him to understand the needs and perplexities of ordinary thinking men. And the simple and vivid style in which he lectured and wrote enabled him to communicate to non-specialists an appreciation of the essence of scientific thought as well as of some of the most recondite advances in physics and astronomy. What makes Eddington such an important figure in contemporary thought is not that the synoptic view of the world which he put forward is necessarily the one which will ultimately be found to be nearest the truth, but that he saw that a synoptic view was necessary, and that we cannot be content with a departmentalization of knowledge in which science appears to be disconnected from the other fields of human enquiry—philosophical and religious.

We desire that there should be for Eddington a fitting memorial—one that would maintain and further his own concern for relating the scientific, the philosophical and the religious methods of seeking truth, and which would help to develop that insight into the unity underlying these different methods which was the characteristic aim of his work. We believe that the foundation of an Arthur Stanley Eddington Memorial Lectureship, providing for periodical lectures on some aspect of contemporary scientific thought considered in its bearings on the philosophy of religion or on ethics, to be delivered in Cambridge or elsewhere and to be published, would be well calculated to achieve this object.

To establish this memorial lectureship will require a capital sum of about £2,500. An Appeal Committee has been formed in Cambridge to receive subscriptions, which may be sent to Barclays Bank Limited, Cambridge, for the credit of "The Arthur Stanley Eddington Memorial Lectureship" account, or to the Honorary Secretary, Dr. W. H. Thorpe, Jesus College, Cambridge, or to the Honorary Treasurer, Howard Diamond, A.C.A., 45, St. Barnabas Road, Cambridge. The Honorary Secretary will be pleased to send to those interested details of the plan proposed for administration of the Lectureship for which the Royal Society, Trinity College, Cambridge, and the Society of Friends have agreed to appoint Trustees.

We warmly commend this appeal.

Joseph Barcroft.
E. W. Birmingham.
Max Born.
R. B. Braithwaite.
W. Maude Brayshaw.
G. A. Chase.
Henry Dale.
Howard Diamond.
Herbert Dingle.
Winifred Eddington.
Wilson Harris.
G. B. Jeffery.
Martin Johnson.
Rufus M. Jones.
Harold Spencer Jones.
Kathleen Lonsdale.
E. J. Maskell.
A. Victor Murray.
C. E. Raven.
F. J. M. Stratton.
Hilda Sturge.
W. H. Thorpe.
Henry T. Tizard.
G. M. Trevelyan.
Elsie Watchorn.
A. N. Whitehead.
Edmund T. Whittaker.
Alex. Wood.
H. G. Wood.

INSTITUTE NOTES

The 21st Annual General Meeting of the Institute was held in the rooms of the Royal Society, Burlington House, W.1, on July 23rd. The President and Lady Samuel gave a reception to members and their friends, who numbered over 400; after which addresses on "The Need for Moral and Intellectual Leadership" were given by the President, Professor A. V. Hill (Foreign Secretary of the Royal Society), Canon Leonard Hodgson (Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford) and Professor E. R. Dodds (Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Oxford). All members will receive a copy of these addresses in pamphlet form.

Before this issue of the Journal goes to press, members will have received information concerning the lectures and evening meetings arranged for the session, 1946–47.

If members have back numbers of the Journal for which they have no further use, perhaps they will kindly write to the Institute giving details. Arrangements might then be made for them to donate such copies towards restocking war-damaged libraries on the Continent.

OBJECTS OF THE INSTITUTE

The British Institute of Philosophy exists to bring leading exponents of various branches of Philosophy into direct contact with the general public, with the purpose of satisfying a need felt by many men and women in every walk of life for greater clearness and comprehensiveness of vision in human affairs.

With this broad educational purpose in view, the Institute—

(1) Provides at suitable times in the day and evening courses of lectures by leading exponents in the more important subjects coming within the scope of Philosophy. All branches of Philosophy are represented —Ethics and Social Philosophy, the Philosophy of Law and of the Sciences, of the Fine Arts and of Religion, as well as Logic and Metaphysics and Psychology.

These lectures are free to members.

(2) Issues a quarterly philosophical journal (free to members).

(3) Proposes to form a philosophical Library.

(4) Gives guidance and assistance to individuals in their philosophical reading.

(5) Encourages research in Philosophy.

There are Local Centres of the Institute at Bangor, Cardiff, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle and Durham, and Sheffield.

Further information and forms of application for membership may be had on application to the Director of Studies at University Hall, 14 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1.

[*Suggested*]

FORM OF BEQUEST

I bequeath to THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY the sum of ..... free of duty, to be applied to the purposes of that Institute, and I declare that the receipt of the Honorary Secretary, or other proper officer for the time being of that Institute, shall be sufficient discharge for the same.